United Nations A/58/132

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 July 2003
English
Original: English/French/Spanish

Fifty-eighth session
Item 79 of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region

Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–2	2
II.	Replies received from States	3–52	2
	A. Algeria	3–30	2
	B. Holy See	31	6
	C. Mexico	32–34	7
	D. Slovenia	35–48	7
	E. Venezuela	49–52	10
III.	Replies received from intergovernmental organizations	53–59	11
	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe	53–59	11

* A/58/50/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

03-42561 (E) 290703

I. Introduction

1. On 22 November 2002, the General Assembly adopted resolution 57/99, by which it called upon all States of the Mediterranean region that had not yet done so to adhere to all the multilaterally negotiated legal instruments related to the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, thus creating the necessary conditions for strengthening peace and cooperation in the region, and encouraged all States of the region to favour the necessary conditions for strengthening the confidence-building measures among them by promoting genuine openness and transparency on all military matters, by participating in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures and by providing accurate data and information to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The Assembly also encouraged the Mediterranean countries to strengthen further their cooperation in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, taking into account the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, and in combating international crime and illicit arms transfers and illicit drug production, consumption and trafficking, which posed a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the region and therefore to the improvement of the current political, economic and social situation and which jeopardized friendly relations among States, hindered the development of international cooperation and resulted in the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the democratic basis of pluralistic society. Furthermore the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on means to strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and is based on information received from States and intergovernmental organizations.

2. In this connection, a note verbale dated 7 March 2003 was sent to States and relevant intergovernmental organizations requesting their views. The replies received are reproduced in sections II and III below. Any further replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from States

A. Algeria

[Original: French]
[25April 2003]

3. Algeria fully supports the objectives and activities contemplated by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/99. In that connection, Algeria has spared no effort in translating into action the aims of the resolution, notably through diplomatic efforts in the areas described below.

Political and security partnership

4. Algeria has always believed that security in the Mediterranean region and security in Europe are inseparable and require a comprehensive and balanced approach. That approach needs to take into account the legitimate interests of all parties in the Euro-Mediterranean area, whose main objective is to bring peace and security for all and to build shared prosperity in the interests of all the peoples of the region.

5. This has been the thinking behind Algeria's diplomatic activities in regional forums such as the Barcelona process, the Mediterranean Forum, the Five Plus Five framework and the partnership with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), with an emphasis on the common interest in consolidating peace and security in the Euro-Mediterranean area and in cooperating through permanent and constructive dialogue to build a genuine partnership.

6. In considering all the concerns of the Mediterranean region, the Barcelona process has laid the foundation for a new relationship between the two sides of the Mediterranean, one based on partnership and common interest. The various conferences held as part of the Barcelona process provided a strong political stimulus to the Euro-Mediterranean relationship by giving it a comprehensive, balanced and multidimensional approach based on the necessary balance between the three parts of the Barcelona Declaration (political and security partnership, economic and financial partnership and partnership in social, cultural and human affairs).

7. Joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Mediterranean Dialogue was also a strategic choice for Algeria, reflecting the priority it attaches to strengthening cooperation within the Mediterranean region to prevent conflict and bring peace and stability.

8. This dialogue with NATO is all the more valuable to a very sensitive region because it addresses an important dimension of the Barcelona process: measures to build security and confidence. That dimension has been prevented from developing to any significant degree by the Middle East conflict.

9. Algeria welcomes the adoption by the NATO summit held in Prague of a paper entitled "Upgrading the Mediterranean Dialogue, including an inventory of possible areas of cooperation", as it provides new opportunities for cooperation between NATO and the countries of the Mediterranean in political, strategic and civil matters.

10. Algeria has also made active diplomatic efforts within the Five Plus Five framework and the Mediterranean Forum, which provide opportunities for useful and relevant regional discussions on a permanent basis. Because they are informal and flexible, these cooperation mechanisms serve as a think tank to drive forward the pursuit of stability and security in the region by various means, including new confidence-building measures to strengthen dialogue and consultation between the member countries.

Economic and financial partnership

11. Economic and financial cooperation is an important building block of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership: the aims are to speed up the economic development of the countries of the southern Mediterranean so as to narrow the gap between them and the advanced countries of the North and to encourage South-South integration to establish an area of peace, security and stability in the Mediterranean.

12. On 22 April 2002, in Madrid, Algeria and the European Union signed an association agreement that provides an updated and forward-looking framework for cooperation and demonstrates the commitment and willingness of the two parties to establish strong and lasting cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

13. Against that background, Algeria is encouraging all initiatives to strengthen Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, particularly those aimed at developing the western Mediterranean, which has more certain prospects for integration and interaction. In that connection, Algeria is seeking economic and financial support from the European Union to encourage advanced cooperation between the countries of the Arab Maghreb Union and the European States of the northern Mediterranean.

14. Algeria is convinced that the economic and financial partnership launched by the Barcelona process plays an important role in narrowing the development gap between the northern and southern Mediterranean regions and urges its European partners to give the Barcelona process the financial resources it needs to match the objectives it has set for itself, first and foremost by strengthening the financing provisions of the MEDA II programme, the principal financial instrument of the European Union for the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for the period 2000-2006. It also advocates the promotion of foreign direct investment and its equitable distribution among the countries of the region.

15. Algeria also welcomes the establishment of the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership, which is a first step in reviving economic growth, but it remains convinced that the plan to set up a Euro-Mediterranean Investment Bank is the best way to meet the huge financing needs generated by the task of ensuring that the economies of the countries of the southern Mediterranean develop and catch up.

16. Algeria also calls for a review of the debt issue with a view to debt cancellation and relief, including for middle-income countries, and the possibility of debt-equity swaps. The aim is to establish new economic relations and promote a genuine and lasting partnership for development as the background for creating an area of shared prosperity in the Mediterranean.

Partnership in social, cultural and human affairs

17. With respect to social, cultural and human affairs, Algeria considers that the human dimension is at the heart of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, and its inclusion in the Barcelona process reflects the aspiration of the peoples of the region to live together in a climate of peace and community and their deep desire to act to further that ideal by establishing a calm and fruitful dialogue founded on the richness of their cultural diversity and the greatness of their shared heritage.

18. Algeria has a substantial and settled community in Europe and justifiably believes that genuine Euro-Mediterranean partnership cannot be confined to a free-trade area for goods and services but excluding the movement of people. In that connection, Algeria is working to overcome the lack of understanding between the two sides of the Mediterranean regarding the movement of people and to promote a fruitful and constructive dialogue on that matter.

19. Algeria accordingly welcomes the progress that has led to the establishment of the Justice and Home Affairs component of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation to promote assistance in judicial matters, in migration and in combating undesirable transnational phenomena. It has contributed substantially to that cooperation and is working with determination to implement it on the ground.

Strengthening international and regional peace and security

20. Algeria believes that the establishment of confidence-building measures to strengthen peace and security in the Mediterranean region and throughout the world must be based on just and lasting solutions to conflicts, respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the peaceful settlement of disputes and concrete, effective disarmament measures, including the accession of all States of the region to the multilateral agreements banning nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction (such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention) and the submission of all their nuclear installations to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

21. Transparency in armaments is another valuable tool for creating a climate of confidence in the Mediterranean region. It should also be aimed at preventing the destabilizing accumulation of weapons of all types. Algeria, while recognizing the importance of these objectives, considers that national sovereignty and the right of States to preserve their security and to enjoy undiminished security are also important. Measures to enhance transparency must be consensual, non-discriminatory and complete.

22. At a time when the eastern part of the Euro-Mediterranean region is facing violence and war, littoral States must demonstrate shared political will to take up common challenges in a spirit of solidarity through respect for the principles enshrined in international law, especially those of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, the non-use of force or the threat of force and respect for sovereignty. This would help to strengthen democracy, consolidate the rule of law and eliminate new types of threats to peace and security, in particular the scourge of terrorism and transnational organized crime.

23. Algeria remains committed to the Middle East peace process and to the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region. The advent of this peace can only strengthen security and stability in the Mediterranean, to the benefit of all the peoples of the region.

24. Algeria condemns the blocking of the peace process through the policy of violence practised by the State of Israel against the Palestinian people and its legitimate leadership and remains convinced that the Palestinian issue can be settled only by implementing the Arab peace plan adopted by the Beirut Arab Summit in March 2002 and accepted unanimously by the international community as an instrument for peace and for regional concord and by establishing a Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

Combating international terrorism and organized crime

25. Another area considered a priority for all the partners involved in the Mediterranean forums is combating terrorism, which has become a worldwide danger since the tragic events of 11 September and thus a threat to international peace and security.

26. Algeria remains in the forefront of the worldwide effort to combat this threat and has worked at the regional and international levels to draw up the major international counter-terrorism conventions. Algeria spent more than a decade

fighting this transnational scourge alone, and has therefore contributed to the stability of the Mediterranean region.

27. Algeria is proud to have played a part in making the prevention and repression of terrorism part of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and is continuing to fulfil its role and contribute its experience to the international community's efforts to eliminate this transnational scourge completely.

28. Algeria is a major participant in the implementation of the plans of action to counter transnational terrorism adopted by NATO, OSCE and the Mediterranean Forum; they are a considerable step forward in the process of eradicating that worldwide threat finally and completely.

29. The countries of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership have also focused on transnational organized crime, as it is one of the dangers that threatens the harmonious development of the countries of the South. Algeria has ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and cooperates with the Conference of Ministers of Western Mediterranean Countries to improve methods of preventing and fighting this scourge and countering international criminal networks.

30. Security and stability in the Mediterranean also depend on waging a constant battle against the trade in small arms and light weapons, which worsens conflicts and encourages terrorism and transnational crime. Algeria is aware of this danger, and has been making a permanent contribution to the international community's efforts to combat the phenomenon, thus consolidating the aims of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

B. Holy See

[Original: English]
[7 April 2003]

31. The Holy See adhered to the following six multilaterally negotiated legal instruments related to the field of disarmament and non-proliferation:

(a) Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, ratified 25 February 1971;

(b) Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and its four Protocols, ratified 22 July 1997;

(c) Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, ratified 17 February 1998;

(d) Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, ratified 12 May 1999;

(e) Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, ratified 18 July 2001;

(f) Convention on the Prohibition of the of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, ratified 4 January 2002.

C. Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[14 May 2003]

32. The Government of Mexico considers that the progress made in the areas of peace, security, stability and cooperation and in the social, economic and cultural development of the population of the Mediterranean region is closely linked to the developments in those areas at the global level and, more specifically, in the Middle East.

33. Mexico also takes the view that the accession of the Mediterranean States to the multilateral and regional instruments relating to disarmament and arms control and their compliance with those instruments are fundamental to the strengthening of security and cooperation in that region. Efforts to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime are also a critical part of that undertaking.

34. Lastly, the Mexican Government considers that the adoption and consolidation of measures to ensure transparency and confidence-building in both the military and non-military spheres is essential for the strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

D. Slovenia

[Original: English]
[3 June 2003]

35. The information submitted by the Republic of Slovenia pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/99 responds to paragraphs 5 to 7 of the resolution.

Information pursuant to paragraph 5

36. Slovenia is subject to all international instruments relating to disarmament and non-proliferation and endeavours to create the conditions necessary for the strengthening of peace and cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

37. With respect to applicable international instruments relating to disarmament and non-proliferation, the Slovenian army implements on a regular basis all international agreements, treaties, conventions and initiatives binding on the Republic of Slovenia and those which the army is responsible for implementing in full or in part.

38. Slovenia is also party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, including its amended Protocols II and IV.

39. Slovenia has also been implementing the relevant measures of transparency within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (Vienna document 1999, OSCE document on small arms and light weapons, Association of European Migration Institutions, Global Exchange of Military Information, Conventional

Arms and Military Expenditures Register and the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects).

40. Following is a review of regulations relating to the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation:

(a) Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, together with its Protocols I and III (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 9/92);

(b) Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 9/92);

(c) Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 9/97);

(d) Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 16/98);

(e) Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Identification (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 9/2000);

(f) Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices (Protocol II), as amended on 3 May 1996, annexed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 24/2002), and additional Protocol to the Convention (Protocol IV) (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 24/2002).

Information pursuant to paragraph 6

41. The Ministry of Defence reports regularly on defence expenditure and submits accurate data and information to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms on a yearly basis.

Information under paragraph 7

42. The current activities of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia in the Mediterranean region are aimed at European countries in particular. In addition to bilateral cooperation with the countries of the region, the Ministry has also been active within different organizations and initiatives, such as the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the South-east European Cooperative Initiative, the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative and so on.

43. As a member State of the European Union (EU), Slovenia will also become a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona process) and will, where possible, participate in the activities in the security/political, economic, social and cultural fields.

44. In combating organized crime, the police force has implemented or implements two "twinning programmes", one with the Spanish police (currently under way) and the other with the Italian police (concluded in 2002).

45. Within the EU AGIS programme, the Ministry of the Interior has been planning cooperation between Slovenia and an appropriate Spanish unit active within the framework of the "Guardia Civil"; the aim of the project is to draw up a European programme of training of special units from EU member States.

46. The Ministry of the Interior has concluded agreements on cooperation in the field of combating organized crime and terrorism with Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Serbia and Montenegro.

47. In addition, the Republic of Slovenia has concluded agreements with Croatia, Greece, Italy and Serbia and Montenegro on the readmission of persons who do not meet conditions for residence in the territories of the States parties to the agreement.

48. Following is a review of regulations relating to strengthening cooperation in combating all forms of terrorism and in the fight against organized crime and the illicit transfer of weapons and the manufacture, consumption and trafficking of drugs that pose a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the region:

(a) Succession: Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft; Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 9/92);

(b) Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 9/92);

(c) Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents (Official Gazette RS-MPJ, No. 9/92);

(d) International Convention against the Taking of Hostages; Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (Official Gazette M-MPJ, No. 9/92);

(e) Protocol on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Official Gazette No. 9/92);

(f) Act Ratifying the Arrangement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of Hungary on Cooperation in the Fight against Terrorism, Illicit Trafficking in Drugs and Organized Crime (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 1/94);

(g) Act Ratifying the Arrangement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of Croatia in the Fight against Terrorism, Smuggling and Abuse of Drugs and against Organized Crime (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 3/94);

(h) Act Ratifying the Arrangement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on Cooperation in the Fight against Terrorism, Illicit Trafficking in Drugs and Organized Crime (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 18/94);

(i) Act Ratifying the Arrangement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of Albania on Cooperation in the Fight against Terrorism, Illicit Trafficking in Drugs and Organized Crime (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 18/94);

(j) Act Ratifying the Arrangement between the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia and the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Austria on Cooperation in Suppressing International Organized Crime, International Illicit Drug Trafficking and International Terrorism (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 4/96);

(k) Act Ratifying the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Czech Republic on Cooperation in Suppressing Illicit Trafficking in Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and against Organized Crime and the Fight against Terrorism (Official Gazette M-MP, No. 9/99);

(l) Act Ratifying the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 27/2000);

(m) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on Cooperation in the Fight against Organized Crime, Illicit Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors, Trafficking, Terrorism and Other Serious Crimes (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 17/2001);

(n) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of Romania on Cooperation in Fighting against Organized Crime, Illicit Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors, Trafficking, Terrorism and Other Serious Crimes (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 6/2001);

(o) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria on Cooperation in the Fight against Organized Crime, Illicit Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors, Trafficking, Terrorism and Other Serious Crimes; (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 25/2002 of 22 March 2002, International Treaties 7/2002);

(p) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation Concerning Cooperation in the Fight against Organized Crime, Illicit Drug Trafficking, Terrorism and Other Forms of Crime (Official Gazette RS-UP, No. 90/3301 of 15 November 2001, International Treaties No. 26/2001);

(q) Declaration on the Joint Fight against Terrorism (Official Gazette RS-MP, No. 82/2001).

E. Venezuela

[Original: Spanish]
[5 June 2003]

49. In connection with General Assembly resolution 57/99, the Government of Venezuela concurs with that resolution when it highlights the importance for all States of the Mediterranean region to adhere to all the multilaterally negotiated legal instruments related to the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, for this would create a lawful and reliable framework for action.

50. Furthermore, as it has stated in a number of subregional, regional and multilateral forums, Venezuela agrees, as indicated in the resolution, that a multidimensional approach to security must be taken, given the emergence of

different types of threats with a multidimensional scope; although, at the same time, the classical concept of security based on defence against external aggression should not be set aside.

51. The Mediterranean region has to take into consideration the new, non-traditional threats that are present in contemporary society, among them problems having to do with the economy, social issues, health and the environment, extreme poverty, terrorism, drug trafficking and organized international crime.

52. In taking on these challenges, it is imperative to rely on multilateral cooperation in the various areas, this being the only possible means of successfully achieving the ultimate objective of removing from the face of the earth problems such as these, which weaken the security of States.

III. Replies received from intergovernmental organizations

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

[Original: English]
[25 April 2003]

53. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe currently conducts relations with six Mediterranean partners for cooperation within the framework of the Mediterranean Dialogue, which goes back to the beginning of the Helsinki process.

54. In the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, participating States included a Mediterranean chapter in which they stated their conviction that "security in Europe ... is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean as a whole and that accordingly the process of improving security should not be confined to Europe but should extend to other parts of the world, and in particular to the Mediterranean area". The linkage between security in Europe and in the Mediterranean region has been underscored time and again in subsequent documents of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and OSCE.

55. OSCE events in which Mediterranean partners participate include summits, ministerial council meetings, high-level meetings with the OSCE Troika and review conferences, as well as other meetings and joint activities, such as the informal Mediterranean Contact Group and annual seminars.

56. The meetings of the informal Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation, which have convened since 1995, provide an opportunity for participating States and the six Mediterranean Partners to facilitate the interchange of information of mutual interest and the generation of ideas. This year, the Contact Group is under the chairmanship of Bulgaria, as the incoming member of the OSCE Troika. Subjects under discussion include issues related to all three dimensions of the Organization's comprehensive approach to security — the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human dimensions — for example, its activities in field missions, confidence-building measures, freedom of the media and so on.

57. In the spirit of the Platform for Cooperative Security, which sets out the importance of complementarity and coordination with other international organizations, the OSCE Mediterranean Dialogue complements that of other organizations promoting partnership with Mediterranean Partners.

58. There are a number of activities in which the Mediterranean Partners can participate: existing provisions provide for partners to send observers to electoral missions of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and to second, on a voluntary basis, mission members to OSCE field missions.

59. Currently, OSCE is conducting an outreach programme for Mediterranean Partner States at their request. This involves training sessions and briefings on subjects of the partners' choice in which OSCE has gained extensive experience.

United Nations A/58/133

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 July 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session
Item 41 (b) of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Somalia and its people continue to suffer from years of internal strife and political instability combined with periodic drought and flooding, making them, despite their remarkable resilience, among the poorest and most vulnerable people on earth. International humanitarian agencies still provide, or assist in providing, the vast majority of basic services to the country, putting continued demands on the limited pool of financial resources. Areas of particular concern regarding funding include the education, health, water and sanitation, and economic recovery sectors.

The highest priorities for the remainder of 2003 include containing the spread of HIV/AIDS, increasing the enrolment of children in school, strengthening protection frameworks, providing basic services for vulnerable communities, and strengthening field coordination to maximize the impact of scarce resources.

Considerable progress has been made in achieving the goals and objectives of the common humanitarian action plan for 2003, which broadly seeks to save lives and improve livelihoods; to expand access to basic services; to assist in the integration and protection of displaced populations, minorities, refugees returning from exile and other vulnerable groups; and to support good governance and the rule of law, peace-building and economic recovery.

* A/58/50/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

03-42741 (E) 080803

The present report concludes that, despite the significant progress made during the reporting period, the volatile security situation and lack of funding continue to hamper humanitarian recovery and development programmes in Somalia, leading to increased vulnerability within Somali communities.

Member States are urged to support programmes through the consolidated appeals process and the Trust Fund for Peace-Building in Somalia, which are aimed at assisting Somali communities to rebuild, to reconcile their differences and to work towards peace.

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 57/154 of 16 December 2002, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures for the implementation of the resolution and to report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session. The report reviews the current and prevailing conditions in Somalia for the period from 22 May 2002 to 22 May 2003 in relation to humanitarian relief and economic and social rehabilitation, taking into consideration the assistance provided by the United Nations and its partners. It also draws attention to progress made over the past year and focuses on priority areas for assistance according to expected developments.

II. Socio-economic situation

A. Political and security situation

2. President Daniel arap Moi inaugurated the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-sponsored Somali National Reconciliation Conference at Eldoret, Kenya, on 15 October 2002. Many Somali leaders, political figures and civil society representatives attend the ongoing Conference, currently being held in Mbagathi, near Nairobi. The Conference is aimed at creating a broad-based all-inclusive government for Somalia while maintaining the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of the country. My Representative and the United Nations Political Office for Somalia continue to actively monitor and support the reconciliation process, while the United Nations country team and its partners have intensified operational efforts to contribute to peace-building and reconciliation inside Somalia.

3. The first phase of the Conference resulted in the signing of the Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process on 27 October 2002 (see S/2002/1359, annex). That was followed in December by two agreements by Somali leaders on restoration of security and normalcy in the city of Mogadishu. The parties committed themselves to the facilitation of humanitarian access and humanitarian space for the international aid community. However, in my reports on Somalia of February and June 2003 (S/2003/231 and S/2003/636), I noted with concern the numerous reports of violations of the ceasefire by its signatories.

4. The second phase of the peace talks has involved discussion and adoption by consensus of the reports of the six reconciliation committees, covering federalism and a provisional charter; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; land and property rights; economic recovery, institution-building and resource mobilization; conflict resolution and reconciliation; and regional and international relations. The third and final phase will discuss power sharing and the formation of a new government as reconciliation efforts continue inside Somalia.

5. After closely monitoring the situation, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) delegation has resumed regular flights, suspended at the start of war, which has allowed the return of international staff from ECHO implementing partners to Somalia.

6. While relative stability prevails and has improved in the northern regions, Somalia continues to suffer from violence and armed conflict throughout much of the southern and central areas. In the early part of 2003, fighting affected the Bay, Middle Juba, Mudug and Lower Shabelle regions, as well as Mogadishu. Tensions have also limited access to the Sool, Sanaag, Middle Shabelle and Gedo regions.

7. The heaviest conflict has been around the once stable humanitarian base of Baidoa, where fighting among the factions of the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA) have forced international aid staff and a number of the Somali community to leave the town. In addition, clan conflicts around Bu'aale in the Middle Juba region have claimed scores of lives. Access of United Nations international staff to Mogadishu remains restricted owing to ongoing clan conflict and criminal activity. Mogadishu is home to an estimated 20 per cent of the Somali population, including 150,000 internally displaced persons, many of whom have been displaced for over a decade.

8. While the southern and central regions remain largely characterized by violence and armed conflict, security has improved in the Juba regions, in particular in the area of Kismayo, where local leaders have created a relatively secure operating environment.

9. "Somaliland" continues to stabilize, and 38 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 11 United Nations agencies continue to work in this region in an increasingly coordinated manner. The first peaceful multi-party presidential elections were held on 14 April 2003.

10. In "Puntland", conflict in 2002 that affected the access of international staff to the area has been resolved through negotiation, and a peace agreement was signed in May 2003 between the incumbent president and the opposition. This and a memorandum of cooperation negotiated with the "Puntland" administration has allowed humanitarian aid work to continue and for the United Nations system and its partners to take steps to expand operations there in support of peace-building, as well as to revitalize coordination mechanisms.

11. Meanwhile, the Panel of Experts established to collect information on violations of the arms embargo, in its report to the Security Council of 25 March 2003 (S/2003/223), presented evidence on the continued flow of weapons and ammunition supplies to and through Somalia from sources outside the country, in contravention of the arms embargo. Through its resolution 1474 (2003) of 8 April 2003, the Council decided to re-establish the Panel of Experts for six months to continue investigating violations of the arms embargo. The strengthening of the implementation of the embargo is pertinent for an improvement of the operating environment of humanitarian and developmental support in southern and central Somalia.

B. Humanitarian issues

12. Continued fighting within Somalia has repeatedly disrupted the provision of humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance to a significant proportion of the population, most of which is already facing destitution, malnutrition and restricted or complete lack of access to even the most basic social services.

13. Some 400,000 Somalis remain refugees, while another estimated 300,000 to 370,000 are long-term internally displaced persons. The latter continue to live in congested and unsanitary conditions, lacking access to basic services and subjected to rape and other human rights violations from armed elements in and around the camps. However, during the reporting period, the United Nations operational agencies and their partners have continued their work and, where possible, have intensified activities inside Somalia related to the delivery of humanitarian relief assistance to vulnerable groups.

14. In terms of food production, Somalia has benefited from two good rainy seasons, which have generally reduced acute food security problems. Overall cereal production reached a post-war high in March 2003. However, areas of vulnerability remain in some northern regions. Insecurity has adversely affected livelihoods in some southern areas, particularly surrounding Baidoa and Buurhakaba in the Bay region, and in Bu'aale and Jilib in the Lower and Middle Juba regions, due to reduced access to farmland and harvests.

C. Economic issues

15. As part of the work of the World Bank/United Nations Development Programme (UNPD) Somalia Watching Brief Programme to monitor socio-economic developments in conflict, household survey data are currently analysed to compile basic socio-economic data, including family income and expenditure. This is complemented by a survey on health and reproductive statistics supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The project is developing local institutional capacity to monitor poverty by establishing poverty monitoring and assessment technical units within functional administrations. A major benchmark for this project will be the production of a Millennium Development Goals report in 2003, which will support the preparation of an interim poverty strategy paper with the participation of Somali administrations to the extent possible.

16. UNDP and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have supported the northern ports of Berbera and Boosaaso in developing and strengthening facilities and local management capacity. Somali authorities are now managing both ports, and UNDP continues to support two vocational training centres, responding to private sector opportunities for employment.

17. Somalia is in "non-accrual status" with the World Bank and has not produced any lending activity since 1991. However, Somalia is one of the four low-income countries under stress adopted for priority intervention jointly by UNDP and the World Bank Group. The cost of interventions in the areas of support to macroeconomic data analysis and dialogue, creation of an enabling environment for the livestock and meat industry, coordinated action plan to address HIV/AIDS issues and capacity-building for skills development/centres of training will be shared by the World Bank ($4.6 million from its Post-Conflict Fund), UNDP ($1.3 million) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) ($0.4 million).

18. Since 11 September 2001, many countries have placed severe restrictions and/or bans on the remittance of foreign currency to Somalia using their informal *hawala* remittance system. Remittances are the largest foreign currency earner in

Somalia, estimated at approximately $750 million to $1 billion per annum. UNDP has encouraged the establishment of a transparent and accountable *hawala* system by advocating on their behalf to the authorities of the various host countries and by conducting workshops both in Somalia and abroad. Since UNDP has gotten involved, Norway has agreed to lift its ban, while the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Department for International Development) has agreed to co-sponsor a workshop on this issue with UNDP in London this summer.

19. The ban imposed on the export of livestock from Somalia due to the existence of Rift Valley fever has had a major impact on the economy and especially the livelihoods of pastoralists all over the country. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNDP have been working jointly to remove the ban on chilled meat and livestock through several missions to the Gulf of Aden and by supporting an initiative for the establishment of a common livestock organization that could regulate the industry through an improved system of disease surveillance, inspection and certification, especially targeting livestock and meat products for export. In April 2003, a meeting in Dubai secured broad support from municipalities in the United Arab Emirates, Somali authorities and the business sector.

20. A labour-creation project of the International Labour Organization (ILO) has led to short-term employment opportunities through the rehabilitation of economically viable infrastructure. Projects initiated to date include capacity-building for the Somaliland Roads Authority, community involvement in several local drainage construction projects and a community clean-up project in Mogadishu.

21. The International Civil Aviation Organization's Civil Aviation Caretaker Authority for Somalia, in cooperation with UNDP, continued to operate the Flight Information Centre in Nairobi to provide for the safe conduct of air transport operations in the airspace allocated to Somalia, as well as air-traffic and associated safety-related services at a number of airports in Somalia.

III. United Nations assistance in Somalia

A. Food security and rural development

22. Close collaboration continues among all partners involved in eradicating hunger. The Food Security Assessment Unit of FAO continues to provide the aid community with high-quality food security and nutritional analyses. Inter-agency assessments are frequently mounted by the Food Security Assessment Unit, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Food Programme (WFP) to address humanitarian crises in an optimal way.

23. Food contributions have enabled the United Nations to sustain the lives of the most vulnerable as well as to reduce food insecurity to a large extent. During 2002, WFP distributed a total of 13,485 metric tons of food commodities reaching some 987,195 beneficiaries through relief, rehabilitation and social support activities. There was a marked increase in emergency relief distributions in 2002, due to the acute drought and failure of the 2001 rains in Gedo and the north-east. Thus 28 per cent more beneficiaries were reached than in 2001. In 2003, WFP distributed a total

of 3,210 tons of food commodities for some 187,920 beneficiaries in Somalia in various programmes. Total WFP distribution to April 2003 was 12,225 tons.

24. NGOs have also continued to play a vital role in food distribution. CARE, for example, delivered a total of 1,260 tons in the Bay, Bakool, Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle regions as food for work and as relief food in the Gedo region. Regular support is provided to 12 supplementary feeding centres and 3 therapeutic feeding centres.

25. WFP supported food-for-work activities in the agricultural and water sectors, which assisted the vulnerable populations in maintaining and enhancing agricultural activities through clearing, preparing and protecting farmland in addition to rehabilitating water catchments. During 2003, WFP assisted some 97,500 beneficiaries with 1,487 tons of food in community-based programmes.

B. Health and nutrition

26. Contributions to the health and nutrition sector have helped to reduce the population's vulnerability to disease. UNICEF and WHO are the lead agencies in immunization activities, including the expanded programme of immunization, which have resulted in a reduction in child mortality. It is estimated that the national coverage for measles and diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis/polio was up to approximately 40 per cent by the end of 2002. More than 97 per cent coverage was achieved during the national immunization days, targeting approximately 1,383,000 children per round.

27. In the first quarter of 2003, United Nations agencies and their partners immunized about 1.23 million children against polio and another estimated 850,000 received vitamin A supplements. Four additional tuberculosis centres were introduced, in Wanle Weyne, Kismayo and Bu'aale, as well as two in Mogadishu, thus spreading the use of the effective directly observed treatment strategy.

28. WFP provides food to the supplementary feeding centres through UNICEF-supported centres. This intervention has also helped to reduce malnutrition rates from a 20 per cent global rate in October 2001 to 14.8 per cent in Bakool in September 2002. Meanwhile, WFP continues to provide food commodities in support of the therapeutic feeding centres operated by Action contre la faim in Mogadishu.

29. With regard to maternal health, UNICEF and WHO have provided regular support to mother and child health clinics through the provision of equipment and supplies in order to increase their capacity.

30. In an effort to aggressively address the spreading of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, it has become apparent that it is necessary to establish the extent of the problem and to develop a concerted inter-agency strategy to prevent the epidemic from taking hold in Somalia. In this respect, United Nations agencies and their partners continued to support activities aimed at raising awareness of HIV/AIDS in Somalia. Twelve sentinel sites have been supported in three zones, and sexually transmitted disease kits and drugs were provided to those sites. UNFPA has made available medical drugs to treat sexually transmitted infections to 15 sentinel sites for six months.

31. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) launched a public awareness campaign based on the links between HIV/AIDS and female genital mutilation, while the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) continued activities aimed at raising awareness in "Somaliland" of the increasing risk of exposure of women to HIV/AIDS as well as the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS and preventive care.

32. UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF and WHO jointly rehabilitated and equipped the Hargeysa Health Training Institute. This institute trains much needed medical personnel and thus contributes considerably to the improvement of health services. In January 2003, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and WHO organized a training workshop on instructional technology for 13 nursing tutors from the Hargeysa Institute of Health Sciences, Somali Nursing Institute (Boosaaso) and the SOS Hospital (Mogadishu).

C. Water and sanitation

33. The manner in which water projects are designed and supported by the international community can often be instrumental in fostering tolerance within communities. To this end, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) continued to work in close partnership with local authorities in Burco to increase water production and the sustainability of water systems for the town and within returnee communities in partnership with UNDP.

34. Likewise, UNHCR provided emergency support to the Hargeysa water supply system to increase water production and keep the system operational, benefiting approximately 350,000 people, including returnees and internally displaced persons. UNICEF completed the planning and delivery of supplies for an urban water system in Marka. When complete, the system will provide water to an estimated 35,000 people in this conflict-affected area.

35. UNHCR has rehabilitated and improved the water systems in various locations in the Awdal region and in Qoryooley. To further improve the access to water for humans as well as livestock, UNHCR has rehabilitated a total of 80 dams, reservoirs, wells and boreholes in the Awdal, West Galbeed, Togdheer, Bari and Nugaal regions. In Boorama town, UNICEF is concluding the installation of a major urban water system benefiting 130,000 people from two communities. Encouraged by the vibrant self-help initiatives in the development of Armo town in the Bari region, UNICEF and UNHCR jointly provided a borehole and a water-distribution system to this fast-growing community.

36. Agencies and donors continue to work closely to promote private sector management, investment and public oversight of urban water systems. This has included the establishment of and the provision of technical support to a local water enterprise in Gaalkacyo to manage and ensure appropriate internal guidelines for project operations.

D. Education

37. UNESCO and UNICEF are the main United Nations agencies working in the field of primary formal and informal education. Moreover, during the reporting

period, UNHCR constructed and rehabilitated 33 primary schools and 4 secondary schools and provided furniture to 40 schools in the main areas of refugee return. The most significant achievement in the education sector has been the creation and distribution of lower primary school textbooks and education kits for all operational schools as well as the finalization of the manuscripts for grade 5 and 6 textbooks in six subjects.

38. Attention is also being focused on adult non-formal education following a needs assessment in May 2003. Lack of funding against the consolidated appeals process has disrupted or delayed the implementation of several critical activities, such as the finalization of grade 6, 7 and 8 textbooks, the training of teachers and instructors and the provision of support to vocational training and adult non-formal education.

39. A teacher training college in Hargeysa has been established with 270 trainees (170 boys and 100 girls). Fifteen college tutors were given two months of in-service training and the college was supplied with resources and learning materials. In addition, the first phase of standardized in-service training was implemented for about 6,500 primary teachers and head teachers, exceeding the targets set. The identification of a core team of trainers, school supervisors and curriculum developers, together with the ongoing efforts of development partners to gradually build towards official and recognized certification for teachers, is a critical development in the education programme, as it is beginning to fill the void of trained educators and to lead to sustainable and high-quality education. To this end, UNHCR rehabilitated Armoud University in Boorama for the use of teacher training.

40. UNESCO leads in vocational training activities. In an effort to support the provision of quality training, 56 vocational centres were surveyed, and managers from some of them were trained in the management of the centres. Collaboration between the centres and the business community was established in a number of towns, and 11 syllabuses were distributed to vocational centres throughout Somalia.

41. During last quarter, a joint ILO/UNDP action plan was prepared for the formation of a regional technical unit for local economic development. A significant achievement has been the launch on a trial basis of an employment-intensive project in Mogadishu using a community-contracting model that is directly employing 600 people (70 per cent of whom are women).

E. Human rights and gender

42. Significant progress has been made in ensuring the participation of women in peace-building. However, deep-rooted gender discrimination in the traditional socio-cultural structures of Somali society, together with frequent misinterpretations of the role of women in relation to Islam, remain considerable barriers to women's empowerment. UNIFEM is supporting the participation of Somali women leaders in IGAD initiatives. It provided training in the areas of leadership and information and communication technology to key women's NGOs in "Somaliland", "Puntland" and Mogadishu in order to support their participation at the IGAD Reconciliation Conference and in the local elections in Somaliland.

43. UNHCR continued to support the Gaalkacyo Education Centre for Peace and Development so as to enhance the role of women in peace-building and to strengthen the awareness of and respect for women's rights, gender equality and harmful traditional practices. In particular, there are continued efforts to promote awareness of the protection of girls against female genital mutilation through various peer groups.

44. In the field of human rights, the United Nations country team has identified protection and human rights as one of the four key priority themes for its work in 2003. Consequently, a United Nations theme group has been established to develop a framework for action in which the country team can engage in advocacy, human rights monitoring, capacity-building, strengthening a protective environment and institutions and the provision of basic services to vulnerable communities.

45. A child protection study is currently being undertaken by UNICEF, Save the Children Fund (United Kingdom and United States of America), Norwegian Peoples' Aid and UNHCR. The study is consolidating both qualitative and quantitative data on the situation of children from particularly vulnerable groups and will identify strategies necessary to strengthen the protective environment for all children in the country. The ensuing programme will emphasize the capacity needs of local partners and will particularly involve youth and women's groups.

46. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in collaboration with UNICEF and others, is conducting a pilot assessment of the needs of internally displaced persons and returnees in Kismayo with respect to protection and livelihood. This is an innovative approach intended to enable a multi-sectoral, multi-agency response and involve close collaboration with local authorities to assist them in meeting their responsibilities for the protection of civilians and, in particular, internally displaced persons. Humanitarian policy workshops are also being planned for various authorities in the country, in which the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (see E/CN.4/1998/Add.2) will be promoted. Furthermore, the Somalia Aid Coordination Body has established a rule of law and protection working group, which will help to strengthen coordination and collaboration among international and local partners in those fields.

F. Repatriation and reintegration

47. Despite many setbacks, conflict in Somalia has declined over the past five years. As a result, official refugee camps are closing and Somali refugees from the camps are settling in their home areas. It is forecast that the repatriation of Somali refugees from Ethiopia to northern Somalia will be completed by December 2004, except for a small residual caseload of refugees, mainly from southern Somalia. Considerable progress is also being made in the process of voluntary repatriation from Djibouti; 25,000 refugees from Ethiopia and 5,000 from Djibouti will be repatriated in 2003.

48. The return in 2002 of more than 32,000 Somali refugees, mostly to "Somaliland", allowed them to participate in peace-building and reconstruction efforts and to exercise their right to vote in the municipal elections held in December 2002, as well as in the presidential elections in April 2003. In mid-May 2003, the first flights from the refugee camps in Kenya to north-eastern Somalia commenced. In 10 flights from Daadaab, Kenya, to Gaalkacyo and Boosaaso,

UNHCR staff have accompanied 534 refugees, who returned to their homeland after 12 long years in exile.

49. Although these interventions have helped communities to absorb returning refugees with reduced competition over scarce resources and have thus contributed to peace and stability, the gap between needs on the one hand and available services and income-generation opportunities on the other remains wide and continues to be a concern.

50. Progress has also been made with regard to the provision of basic services to returnees, internally displaced persons and host communities. UNDP provided basic social services through its Reintegration of Returning Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in Somalia programme. UNDP implemented 18 quick-impact projects to address urgent water, sanitation, health, education and shelter needs, of which 14 are complete.

51. Similarly, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees implemented more than 160 quick-impact reintegration projects during 2002 in "Somaliland", "Puntland" and Mogadishu and its environs, concentrating on the education, water, health and agriculture/income-generating sectors.

G. Development programmes

52. In September, the country team finalized a common strategic framework for humanitarian and development activities: the United Nations Joint Action and Recovery Plan for Somalia. The plan will enhance coordination in humanitarian, recovery and development programming.

53. The new UNDP Rule of Law and Security programme has started implementing activities in "Somaliland" and "Puntland" in the areas of rule of law (judiciary, law enforcement and human rights); small arms control; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; psychosocial initiative; and mine action. Special efforts have been made in the judiciary component to restore expertise and the administrative capabilities of the justice system through training.

54. The Puntland Development Research Centre conducted workshops focusing on the special legal context in Somalia. Through the Academy for Peace and Development, 44 police officers were given human rights training. A vital component of the programme is the inclusion of trained female police and custodial officers. In "Somaliland" the Rule of Law and Security programme has supplied equipment to police stations and provided training to police officers.

55. The small arms control component seeks to promote public awareness and community participation in small arms control and reduction. The registration of weapons in the police force has begun and armouries have been rehabilitated to foster proper control over police weapons as well as training on safe storage and handling.

56. Activities in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration include capacity-building and the provision of support to the National Demobilization Commission, to the Ministry of Finance relating to demobilization issues and to the demobilization of the police, army and custodial personnel through a partnership with the German Agency for Technical Assistance. The mine-action component of

the programme provided for the training of 24 Somali Mine Action Centre staff in "Somaliland". Moreover, a landmine impact survey has been completed, with the final report expected in July 2003.

57. Through a joint project of UNICEF and a Mogadishu-based NGO, 120 former child soldiers have been rehabilitated and reintegrated into their communities and have benefited from a programme of vocational training, conflict resolution and trauma counselling. This has been achieved through engagement with the local private sector. The project will be replicated in Mogadishu, Marka and Kismayo. In a similar project, UNESCO provided enterprise-based training in literacy, numeracy and vocational skills to 450 militia in Mogadishu, 86 per cent of whom are now in gainful employment.

58. The Civic Education for Peace project, managed by UNESCO, has organized eight workshops to train members of its network and local NGOs on issues of conflict resolution, human rights and gender. Some 3,956 members of the community were trained.

H. Coordination and security

59. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is expanding its field presence through the recruitment of additional staff in country. Its primary objectives are to strengthen field coordination in collaboration with the Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB); to negotiate and maintain humanitarian access; to promote humanitarian policies, including the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement; to ensure that the needs and rights of internally displaced persons and other vulnerable communities are being met; and to manage information. SACB has established a secretariat in Hargeysa to allow this process to develop in "Somaliland". The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs also chairs the SACB Humanitarian Response Group to ensure a rapid, appropriate and coordinated response to emergencies.

60. The Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, in cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, continues its efforts to exploit new opportunities for expanded humanitarian operations in stable areas. The United Nations security office has also improved the United Nations emergency communication system in Somalia by installing more high-frequency radio systems and VHF repeaters and by standardizing the frequencies used on all VHF/short-range radios.

61. The United Nations humanitarian coordinator has negotiated humanitarian access by directly engaging with clan and faction leaders in Mbagathi, Kenya, and by approaching representatives of the leaders as well as civil society, business and religious leadership in the field. To this end, the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator and representatives of the country team undertook several missions focusing on access issues in the first quarter of 2003. These missions are part of an ongoing process to increase humanitarian space in the country, which requires a concerted effort at all levels of leadership.

I. Assistance provided by Member States

62. The implementation by the United Nations of humanitarian and development programmes in Somalia is made possible through donor contributions. For the 2003 consolidated inter-agency appeal for Somalia, $71.5 million is requested. However, as at 29 May 2003, funding through the consolidated appeals process was low in virtually all sectors, with only 25 per cent of total requests covered. With major ongoing humanitarian operations in other countries, there is concern that donor funds and attention will be drawn away from Somalia. Efforts to initiate new programmes and maintain the pace of existing ones may be jeopardized if the requirements outlined in the consolidated appeals process are not met in a timely manner.

63. Furthermore, the following contributions have been received for the Trust Fund for Peace-Building in Somalia during the period under review: Ireland, $34,669; Italy, $536,150 and Norway, $836,533.

64. To achieve peace and stability in Somalia, the international community needs to remain fully engaged. Although dismally low, human development indicators have remained steady for the past several years, indicating the positive effect of humanitarian aid and development assistance in keeping the situation stable.

65. The revised appeal requirement remains modest at only $71.5 million. Donors are urged not to let the present and future demands in Iraq jeopardize the progress achieved in Somalia.

IV. Conclusions

66. **Somalia remains one of the poorest countries in the world and continues to present a complex challenge to humanitarian and development initiatives. About 350,000 internally displaced persons are still living in desperate conditions and have no access to international assistance or protection. Chronic food instability has exacerbated the plight of the poorer groups, especially in drought-prone areas. Deterioration in the security situation has resulted in United Nations and other international agencies losing access to large areas, and vulnerable Somalis are prevented from rebuilding their livelihoods in a sustained manner.**

67. **Against this backdrop, the United Nations, in collaboration with implementing partners, continues to deliver humanitarian aid and development assistance in many areas and remains strongly committed to assisting Somalia. However, the low donor response to the consolidated appeals process prevents United Nations agencies from fully addressing Somalia's emergency needs. Member States are therefore urged to actively support humanitarian recovery and development activities in Somalia through the consolidated appeals process and other mechanisms.**

68. **The United Nations, with the support of the international community, will continue to work in support of national reconciliation and social and economic development in Somalia, employing an incremental approach of increased engagement. This approach is ultimately the most useful tool for providing humanitarian and development support. While continuing to provide assistance**

in secure areas, the United Nations will also undertake inter-agency peace-building strategies aimed at strengthening communities and encouraging reconciliation between rival factions.

69. **Finally, as the humanitarian emergency in Somalia persists, it is recommended that further reports on humanitarian activities and economic and social rehabilitation efforts in Somalia continue to be submitted to the General Assembly on a yearly basis.**

United Nations A/58/134

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 July 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session
Item 96 (g) of the preliminary list*
Sustainable mountain development

International Year of Mountains, 2002

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits to the General Assembly a report prepared by the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 55/189 of 20 December 2000 and 57/245 of 20 December 2002.

Summary

The report describes achievements made at the national, regional and international levels throughout 2002, with an emphasis on activities that ensured that the International Year of Mountains, 2002, was more than a communications event but a catalyst for long-term, concrete action for sustainable mountain development. It also highlights the challenges that lie beyond the Year and provides suggestions for consideration by the General Assembly as to how countries might continue to promote and effectively implement sustainable development in mountain regions around the world.

* A/58/50/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

03-42848 (E) 050803

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–4	3
II.	Background	5–7	3
III.	The national and regional stage	8–41	4
	A. National committees	8–12	4
	B. Africa	13–16	5
	C. Asia and the Pacific	17–20	6
	D. Europe	21–26	6
	E. Latin America and the Caribbean	27–31	8
	F. Near East and North Africa	32–36	9
	G. North America	37–41	10
IV.	The global stage	42–69	10
	A. The International Partnership and the Bishkek Mountain Platform	42–48	10
	B. Major global events	49–58	12
	C. Global communications	59–62	14
	D. Networking and information exchange	63–65	15
	E. International action	66–69	15
V.	Achievements	70	17
VI.	Challenges	71–73	18
VII.	Recommendations	74	19

I. Introduction

1. The idea of proposing "mountains" as a theme for an international year was first put forward by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic at an international conference entitled "Mountain research — challenges for the 21st century", convened in Bishkek in 1996. It was subsequently officially presented to the United Nations Secretary-General and received strong support in the Economic and Social Council.

2. The General Assembly, at its fifty-third session in 1998, adopted resolution 53/24, in which it proclaimed 2002 as the International Year of Mountains. The resolution encouraged Governments, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Year to increase awareness of the importance of sustainable mountain development. It also called upon Governments, national and international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to make voluntary contributions in accordance with the guidelines of the Economic and Social Council for international years and anniversaries and to lend other forms of support to the Year.

3. In the same resolution, the General Assembly invited the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to serve as the lead agency for the Year, in collaboration with Governments, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system and NGOs.

4. The present report is submitted in compliance with the request of the General Assembly in resolution 57/245 that the Secretary-General report to it at its fifty-eighth session on the achievements of the Year, under a sub-item entitled "Sustainable mountain development" of the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development". It was prepared by FAO in its capacity as lead agency for the Year and in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and NGOs.

II. Background

5. Awareness of the importance of mountain ecosystems and communities has increased since the adoption of chapter 13 of Agenda 21, entitled "Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development", at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992.

6. There is now increasing recognition that mountains are fragile ecosystems, which are globally important as the source of most of the Earth's freshwater, repositories of rich biological diversity, popular destinations for recreation and tourism and areas of important cultural diversity, knowledge and heritage. Covering about one quarter of the world's land surface, mountains provide a direct life-support base for about 12 per cent of the world's population, as well as essential goods and services to more than half of humankind. Yet, many of the world's most impoverished and food-insecure people live in mountain regions. Consequently, there is a need to ensure the ecological health and the economic and social improvement of mountain areas, for the sake of both mountain inhabitants, whose livelihood opportunities and overall well-being are at stake, and of people living in

lowland areas. As high-energy environments, mountains are recognized as being a stage for natural disasters. By integrating disaster reduction into the broader context of sustainable development, mountain people can ensure that they reduce their own risk and vulnerabilities to these negative impacts.

7. The decision of the General Assembly to observe an international year dedicated to mountains provided a unique opportunity to address the complexity, diversity and magnitude of mountain issues. The real challenge of the International Year of Mountains lay in consolidating and building on the many efforts so far undertaken to protect and develop mountain regions and, in particular, to focus observance of the Year on long-term action that would improve the quality of life in mountain communities and protect fragile mountain environments for generations to come. It is clear that concerted and coordinated action is needed to develop and reinforce the institutional and human capability to continue sustainable mountain development efforts far beyond 2002. Thus, the Year was intended to be more than a series of events and activities. It was, rather, a springboard for launching new and strengthening existing long-term mountain development and conservation efforts.

III. The national and regional stage

A. National committees

8. Following the proclamation by the General Assembly of the International Year of Mountains, and in accordance with Economic and Social Council guidelines for the observance of international years, the Director-General of FAO encouraged countries to establish multi-stakeholder national committees or other mechanisms to plan and implement national observance of the Year.

9. The national response to the International Year of Mountains was tremendous. As of December 2002, 78 national committees or similar mechanisms had been established for observance of the International Year of Mountains in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Near East and North Africa and North America. Many of these national committees had a broad-based membership of stakeholders, including representatives of national government agencies, mountain people, grass-roots organizations, NGOs, civil society, academic and research institutions, the private sector, United Nations agencies, and decentralized authorities. In some countries the national committee for the International Year of Mountains was the first and sole national mechanism for the sustainable development of mountains and the multi-disciplinary composition of the committee provided an opportunity to implement a holistic approach to mountains for the first time.

10. Action at the country level made a significant contribution to the success of the International Year of Mountains and has ensured that a growing network of Governments, organizations, major groups and individuals around the world know that mountains are vital to life. Activities generating awareness of the importance of mountains and the need to protect them included national seminars, concerts, expeditions, school competitions and nationwide television and radio broadcasts. Countries issued commemorative stamps, phone cards and books. Thirty national committees established special International Year of Mountains Web sites to widen dialogue, exchange information and promote country-level action.

11. National committees were encouraged to continue operating beyond 2002 to help develop and implement sustainable development strategies, policies and laws designed to respond to the specific needs, priorities and conditions of the mountain areas of the respective countries. Reports from countries following the 2002 observance of the International Year of Mountains suggest that many national committees established for the Year have evolved — or are considering evolving — into permanent bodies. However, to do so, many national committees will require significant support in the areas of communications, capacity-building, information, strategic planning, policy development, expert consultation and financial resources.

12. It is beyond the scope of the present report to describe the multitude of events, activities and initiatives undertaken within the context of the International Year of Mountains. The following summary highlights the key areas of interest and the priority themes addressed across regions during the Year.

B. Africa

13. Based on information provided to the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, 22 national committees were established for observance of the International Year of Mountains in Africa, in the following countries: Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

14. National committees in Africa coordinated a wide range of activities to spread the key messages of the Year, from organizing sponsored climbs to tree planting on degraded mountain sites. In Lesotho, a national symposium on mountain ecosystems attracted rural community representatives who began initiatives in biodiversity conservation and ecotourism. In Ghana a celebration of chiefs and mountain people was organized on a specially designated National Mountains Day, which drew attention to improper farming practices and the indiscriminate exploitation of bushmeat.

15. The Year saw much progress made in the further development of research- and information-sharing networks, which are disseminating lessons learned and knowledge on sustainable mountain development to a wide constituency on the African continent and beyond. These networks, although created prior to 2002, have largely benefited from the impetus generated by the International Year of Mountains. The African Mountains Association, for example, is establishing forums for enhancing and sharing scientific information on African mountains and highland ecosystems. In August 2002, in collaboration with the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment, it hosted the sixth International Conference on Sustainable Mountain Development in Africa: Agenda for Action, in the United Republic of Tanzania.

16. The environmental agenda in Africa was further advanced in several areas by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment. Its ninth session in Uganda in July 2002 produced the Kampala Declaration on the Environment for Development. This complemented the various joint projects and programmes under way to counter land degradation in African highlands and conserve them for water resources in such ranges as the Eastern Arc mountains, the Drakensberg, Rwenzori and Fouta Djallon. An integrated conservation programme for the ecosystem of the Nimba Mountains is being implemented through a tri-national programme by Côte

d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia. By the end of the Year, several African committees, such as the one in Cameroon, were preparing national programmes and projects on mountain ecosystems and mountain-related issues, while Madagascar succeeded in preparing a national strategy for mountain development.

C. Asia and the Pacific

17. Based on information provided to the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, 14 national committees were established for the observance of the Year in Asia and the Pacific, in the following countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.

18. Linking ecotourism with the conservation and sustainable development of mountains was a major focus in the region. In honour of the International Year of Mountains, Nepal established the Mountain Botanical Garden to promote germplasm conservation of high altitude plants in the country and attract national and international tourists, and created the Shivapuri National Park. In Bhutan in situ orchid and rhododendron gardens were established as educational, recreational and conservation centres. In Sri Lanka, a biodiversity complex located on the biodiversity-rich mountain of Ambuluwawa was the latest addition to the country's national botanical gardens. However, the potentially damaging effects of tourism were highlighted in many national initiatives. In the Republic of Korea a clean-up campaign was conducted in many mountainous areas, with the participation of about 60,000 forest officials, members of the Korean alpine club and the local community. In Pakistan, a clean-up drive in the mountainous Ayubia National Park removed more than two tons of non-biodegradable waste.

19. Many national committees identified mountain forests as priority areas for action. In the Philippines, the Negros Committee for the International Year of Mountains was a key participant in the ongoing advocacy campaign to prosecute illegal loggers in forests of the region. In the Republic of Korea, the Korea Forest Service, which acted as the primary mechanism for the Year, developed the Forest Management Law of 30 December 2002.

20. Many regionally based organizations are initiating programmes and projects in countries in the region and building a mountain focus into their ongoing programmes. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, headquartered in Nepal, is undertaking many projects and addressing problems in the mountains of the Hindu-Kush Himalayas. In addition, it hosts the Asia-Pacific Mountain Network, a regional node of Mountain Forum, as well as the global secretariat for Mountain Forum. During the International Year of Mountains it sponsored and co-organized many events — most notably the Celebrating Mountain Women conference in Bhutan (see para. 57 below) — in the Asian and Pacific region.

D. Europe

21. Based on information provided to the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, 16 national committees or other mechanisms for observance of the Year were established in Europe, in the following countries: Andorra, Armenia,

Austria, Croatia, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro,[1] Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and Ukraine. A committee with broad-based NGO and government support was established in Scotland (United Kingdom). In addition, many European countries, such as Switzerland, identified focal points for concerted action throughout the Year.

22. Tourism and cultural heritage were a focus of many activities in Europe. In Croatia mountaineering facilities were reconstructed on the country's highest mountain, Dinara, and a committee was established to promote it. In Austria, a chain of fires was lit from the eastern frontier of the Alps to the Swiss border at the summer solstice. In Italy, "The Olympic Games of Mountain Cheeses" in November 2002 was the first competition-exhibition on a world scale exclusively reserved for mountain cheeses.

23. Many countries had national strategies and programmes, planned or ongoing, for sustainable mountain development in the region. In 2002, Turkey launched the Mountain Areas National Action Plan involving the participation of a wide cross-section of government institutions, agencies and NGOs. Spain drafted a Spanish Mountain Charter for the future development of its mountain regions and communities. In Romania, a Mountain Law was drafted. In Italy, the International Year of Mountains provided impetus for the reformulation of the mountain law to include a focus on marginalized areas within mountain systems. At the close of the Year, preparations for the establishment of a foundation, Fondazione Italiana per le Montagne, the successor arrangement to the Italian national committee for the International Year of Mountains, were also under way.

24. The forthcoming expansion of the European Union to incorporate new member States clearly has implications for mountains in the region. At the Third European Mountain Convention convened by Euromontana in Inverness, United Kingdom, from 16 to 18 May 2002, representatives of more than 20 European countries explored the preparation of forthcoming reforms related to the expansion: the Common Agricultural Policy (for reform in 2005) and the European Regional Policy (for reform in 2006) and the threats and opportunities for European mountain territories. The European Commission held a seminar dedicated entirely to mountain issues in Brussels from 17 to 18 October 2002.

25. Processes for regional and interregional cooperation were advanced in 2002 by both the International Association for the Protection of the Alps and UNEP. For example, two major meetings were held in June on the possible application of the Alpine Convention to other mountain regions. The meeting in Bolzano, Italy, focused on the Carpathians, while the international conference, "The Alpine Process — an Approach for other Mountain Regions?" in Berchtesgaden, Germany, reflected on the Alps, the Caucasus, the Carpathians, the Hindu Kush-Himalaya, the Central Asian mountain regions and the Altai, and produced the Berchtesgaden Declaration. In November, Innsbruck, Austria, was selected as the location of the permanent secretariat of the Alpine Convention.

26. Various cross-border initiatives were implemented jointly in the Sudety and Carpathian Mountains, which stretch across seven countries of Eastern and Central Europe: Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine. Poland prepared the "Carpathian Red List of Endangered Species" as a result of a university research programme financed by the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative and WWF. The national committee in Ukraine supported a

WWF-funded project to protect endangered brown bears in the same mountain range. Carpathian countries also provided input to the common "Mountain Challenge Statement" which calls for a strengthening of a common European trans-sectoral approach to the management of mountains, building on existing policy statements and initiatives. The statement was to be presented at the Kiev ECO-Forum 2003 and the fifth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe", where the Carpathian Convention was to be signed by the Governments of the region. UNEP is expected to provide the interim secretariat of the Convention.

E. Latin America and the Caribbean

27. Based on information provided to the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, 14 national committees or other mechanisms for observance of the International Year of Mountains were established in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the following countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela.

28. Action in Latin America and the Caribbean was wide-ranging and has been highly influential in mountain development within the region and beyond. Notable contributions from the region to and during the Year included the Cusco Declaration of 2001 and the Huaraz Declaration, which was issued at the Second International Meeting of Mountain Ecosystems, held in Huaraz, Peru, from 12 to 14 June 2002. Much of the activities in the Latin American and Caribbean region were mobilized or organized by dynamic networks, in particular the Andean Mountains Association, the Technical Cooperation Network on Upper Watershed Management in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Consortium for the Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion (CONDESAN), Crescente Fértil, the Network of Sustainable Development and the Environment (REDESMA) and the International Potato Center (CIP). A key agent for communication and information exchange in the region is the Latin American node of the Mountain Forum, which also provided substantive support to the establishment of national committees for the International Year of Mountains in Latin America.

29. Civil society is playing an active role in mountain development initiatives in many countries in the region. Bolivia produced an important "Document of political priorities for the development of mountain ecosystems" aimed at the public and private sectors and civil society. In Peru, the National Working Group on Mountain Ecosystems (GNTEM) was created by the Government as a mechanism of coordination between the State and civil society. GNTEM is now being decentralized and regional subgroupings representing different mountain zones of Peru are appearing. The Group is preparing a National Agenda for Mountains to 2020 and has also been involved in the implementation of a Plan of Action on Mountain Biodiversity and the preparation of methodologies for mountain ecosystems in the tropical Andes (at the subregional Andes level).

30. In Mexico, the National Committee for the International Year of Mountains was engaged in various poverty reduction activities to provide food and training and help in long-term planning. The Committee is strongly committed to sustaining synergies with institutions, working on a mountain programme and drawing up a

sustainable mountain development plan for the next 25 years. It has developed a mountain agenda based on 178 activities with substantial investment.

31. The strong links between mountains and water were addressed by many countries in the region in 2002 and are set to continue to be addressed in 2003, which was proclaimed by the United Nations as the International Year of Freshwater. For example, Cuba developed a programme of fact-finding expeditions to the mountain sources of 295 rivers. This was undertaken not only to create public awareness of the source of freshwater but also to evaluate its conservation status, meet the needs of local populations and develop recommendations for the care and protection of river sources in the country.

F. Near East and North Africa

32. Based on information provided to the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, 10 national committees or other mechanisms for observance of the Year were established in the Near East and North Africa, in the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen.

33. Mountains are an important part of the social, economic and cultural life of countries in the Near East and North African region and the various activities and initiatives undertaken within the context of the International Year of Mountains created greater understanding of their value. The Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia implemented far-reaching public awareness campaigns, particularly through the print and broadcast media.

34. In this region, more typically than in any other, mountains influence the availability of water and help agriculture under conditions that would otherwise be considered completely dry. The International Year of Mountains focused greater attention on the regional processes under way to strengthen water management. For example, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey are embarking on a regional watershed management training project to build capacity to manage watersheds effectively. In Yemen, a nationwide project on watershed management and forestry has a strong potential for supporting and enlarging the country's initiatives to implement chapter 13.

35. Mountain tourism is of increasing concern in the region. The role of mountainous forest areas in economic development and in particular ecotourism was the subject of a workshop in Syria, where the number of visitors to forest sites has increased over recent years. The possibility of organizing the numerous forest sites in Syria for environmental tourism was discussed and areas identified. The cultural heritage of the Al Salamyeh area was defined in particular in efforts to determine ecotourism that would respect and improve the livelihood of the local populations.

36. One of the most striking achievements of the International Year of Mountains was that mountains were integrated into and placed at the forefront of national agendas. Morocco is at present preparing legislation for mountain conservation and development, covering such key issues as infrastructure development and watershed development. Lebanon is in the process of finalizing a National Action Plan for the Fight against Desertification and there is an opportunity to integrate mountain issues into this general plan. In Jordan, the Agriculture Development Strategy 2002-2010

includes many projects related to sustainable mountain development. In Kyrgyzstan, the Government has ratified a National Strategy and Action Plan on the sustainable development of mountain regions of the country.

G. North America

37. Many activities to observe the Year were initiated in North America, particularly through the coordinated efforts of Parks Canada, Mountain Culture at the Banff Centre in Canada, and through the U.S. Department of State and The Mountain Institute in the United States of America.

38. The Mountain Institute played a key role in organizing the global launch of the International Year of Mountains at United Nations Headquarters on 11 December 2001, in association with the International Year of Mountains Focus Group[2] and FAO. The Banff Centre, the only learning centre in Canada dedicated to the arts, leadership development and mountain culture, organized a wide variety of events celebrating the Year with the global mountain community, most notably at the Banff Mountain Summit 2002 — Extreme Landscape: Challenge and Celebration (27-29 October 2002) and at Ecological and Earth Sciences in Mountain Areas (10-14 June, 2002), both held at the Banff Centre in Alberta.

39. The Banff Centre, The Mountain Institute and the Mexican Indigenous Association for Sustainable Development established a regional Mountain Forum node to serve Canada, the United States of America and Mexico. The North American Mountain Forum is currently hosted and maintained by Mountain Culture at the Banff Centre.

40. Parks Canada made a significant contribution to the Year through its heritage tourism strategy initiative in and around national parks in western and northern Canada, in which more than 100 partner organizations created several hundred events and programmes to engage visitors in understanding and appreciating mountains.

41. The International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UIAA) held its general assembly in Flagstaff, Arizona in October 2002 to review the crucial links made between sport and sustainable mountain development during the Year through its global network of 90 member associations.

IV. The global stage

A. The International Partnership and the Bishkek Mountain Platform

42. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, an alliance of national Governments, United Nations agencies and NGOs announced that they would work in partnership to achieve the mountain-specific goals of the Summit.[3] These goals focus on reducing poverty and on food security in mountain communities and on protecting the world's fragile mountain ecosystems from the various threats posed to their freshwater systems and biodiversity.

43. The launching of this partnership, the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions, was a major outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development with respect to mountains, as well as a significant achievement of the International Year of Mountains. It also signaled the formalization of a decade-long evolving partnership of diverse organizations and individuals committed to sustainable mountain development.

44. The purpose of the Partnership, which was initiated by the Government of Switzerland, FAO and UNEP, is to enable more effective implementation of chapter 13 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation. It will build on the Inter-Agency Group on Mountains, which has been the main inter-organizational mechanism to advise on the implementation of chapter 13, as well as on the planning and implementation of the Year. The Partnership aims to encourage and promote alliances that link global, national and local initiatives for sustainable mountain development which manage mountain ecosystems and address chronic poverty in mountain regions through concrete programmes and projects. The Partnership is conceived as an evolving alliance with the flexibility to address the complexity, diversity and magnitude of mountain issues. It will be structured to ensure multi-stakeholder and long-term approaches.

45. The Partnership will develop and strengthen policy initiatives at the international level with the aim of supporting national initiatives and promoting cooperation and partnership between major stakeholders, such as government agencies of both donor and recipient countries, implementing agencies, NGOs, the private sector, the academic and research community and mountain communities themselves. Given the transboundary character of many mountain areas, linking global, national and local efforts will be essential for long-term sustainable development.[4]

46. At the launching of the International Partnership at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Director-General of FAO offered to host a small secretariat at FAO to support the International Partnership. This multi-stakeholder secretariat could include secondments and other resource allocations from intergovernmental institutions, Governments and civil society, but would be anchored by the support of a strong institution. By the end of 2002, the proposal for a secretariat at FAO had received increasingly widespread acceptance.

47. The Partnership was reinforced at the culminating event of the International Year of Mountains, the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit, held in Bishkek from 28 October to 1 November 2002. Summit participants issued a declaration called the Bishkek Mountain Platform which affirmed the Partnership's principles, recommendations and commitments and built on the outcomes of the major events that occurred in the period leading up to and during the International Year of Mountains.

48. The Bishkek Mountain Platform formulates recommendations for concrete action towards sustainable mountain development, providing guidance to Governments and others on how to improve the livelihoods of mountain people, protect mountain ecosystem, and use mountain resources more wisely. The Platform was circulated as a document of the United Nations General Assembly at the fifty-seventh session (under agenda item 86, Sustainable development and international economic cooperation). The Platform should serve as a contribution to debate in the

General Assembly of the United Nations and to the achievement of the Millennium Goals.

B. Major global events

World Mountain Symposium 2001: Community Development between Subsidy, Subsidiarity and Sustainability

49. The four-day symposium, held in Interlaken, Switzerland, from 30 September to 4 October 2001, supported preparations for the Year, with an emphasis on determining ways and means to enhance autonomous development in mountains of the industrialized, developing and transition countries of the world. This conference of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation was facilitated by the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Berne.

International Conference of Mountain Children

50. Children from 13 to 18 years of age met from 7 to 21 May 2002 in Uttaranchal, India, at a conference organized by Research Advocacy and Communication in Himalayan Areas to discuss the needs of mountain children, provide recommendations for the Bishkek Mountain Platform and launch the Mountain Children's Forum. This Internet-based forum is a platform for children to represent themselves and contributed to the Global Movement for Children, an initiative highlighted at the United Nations Special Session on Children in 2002.

High Summit 2002: International Conference around the Continents' Highest Mountains

51. Mountain people, scientists and representatives of NGOs, United Nations agencies and the media participated in simultaneous transcontinental, multimedia regional conferences near some of the world's highest peaks in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America from 6 to 10 May 2002. Sponsored by the Italian National Committee for the International Year of Mountains, the event used Internet and videoconference technology to support an international debate and to develop recommendations for action on five key aspects of mountain development: water, culture, economy, risk and policy.

Second International Meeting of Mountain Ecosystems, "Peru, country of mountains, towards 2020: water, life and production"

52. Indigenous people from Peru and Ecuador, representatives of mountain communities in the Himalayas and many others met in Huaraz, Peru, from 12 to 14 June 2002 at a conference organized by the National Committee of Peru for the International Year of Mountains to produce the Huaraz Declaration on Sustainable Development of Mountain Ecosystems.

World Food Summit: five years later — side event on sustainable mountain development

53. Around 120 delegates from the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and national Governments attended a special side event on sustainable mountain development during the Summit held on 13 June 2002 at FAO

headquarters, Rome. The side event was organized by FAO in collaboration with the International Year of Mountains Focus Group, which presented a declaration affirming its commitment to long-term action in mountains and reinforcing its support for the emerging International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions.

International Conference on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions

54. Held in Adelboden, Switzerland, from 16 to 20 June 2002, this conference, sponsored by the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture and organized in collaboration with FAO, brought together stakeholders from around the world to explore ways of enhancing cooperation in achieving the objectives of two chapters of Agenda 21, chapter 13 on sustainable mountain development and chapter 14 on sustainable agriculture and rural development, and to contribute input to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Conference participants issued the Adelboden Declaration.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002

55. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held from 26 August to 4 September 2002, delegates reviewed progress made on chapter 13 over the past decade and launched the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions, an alliance of countries, intergovernmental organizations and major groups.

Second World Meeting of Mountain Populations

56. Representatives of 115 countries discussed the challenges facing mountain communities worldwide at a conference in Quito, Ecuador, from 20 to 24 September 2002 organized by the Association of Mountain Populations of the World and El Centro de Investigación de los Movimientos Sociales del Ecuador. The meeting, a follow-up to the first World Mountain Forum (Chambéry, June 2000), produced the Quito Declaration.

Celebrating Mountain Women

57. The four-day conference held in Thimphu, Bhutan, from 1 to 4 October 2002 was the first global gathering of mountain women and attracted 250 participants from civil society, non-governmental organizations, the news media, academia, development agencies and donors from 35 countries. Organized by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development and the Mountain Forum, the conference resulted in the Thimphu Declaration, containing recommendations for improved responses to the needs of mountain women.

Bishkek Global Mountain Summit

58. This culminating event of the International Year of Mountains was organized by the Government of Kyrgyzstan, with assistance from UNEP, and held from 28 October to 1 November 2002 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Participants issued the Bishkek Mountain Platform, a framework for future action in mountains.

C. Global communications

59. During 2002 many organizations implemented global communications initiatives to raise awareness of mountain issues and solutions to mountain problems. In support of the International Year of Mountains, the Television Trust for the Environment — the world's largest distributor of environment and development issues-based programming — produced four documentaries on mountains. They were shown first on BBC World's Earth Report in October, as part of a special "mountain month" and were estimated to reach 220 million homes throughout the world. A CD-ROM with a database on all mountain world heritage sites and biosphere reserves was jointly produced by UNESCO and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre. An educational calendar on specific mountain issues was produced by Switzerland and distributed throughout 7,000 schools of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network. All of these efforts fed an emerging wave of public awareness of mountains and a global commitment to projects and programmes that would bring lasting change to mountain areas.

60. FAO, through its International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, helped to mobilize action to protect mountain ecosystems and improve the well-being of mountain people by implementing a global communications plan for the Year which was developed in collaboration with members of the Inter-Agency Group on Mountains. The purpose of the plan was to facilitate a successful International Year of Mountains by translating communications strategies into actions, setting priorities, integrating and facilitating the coordination of the communication efforts of other International Year of Mountains observers and linking communications with resource mobilization.

61. Through the plan, the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit at FAO developed, promoted and widely distributed electronic and printed communication and information materials (in up to 5 languages), produced a television documentary for the BBC and launched a web site in English, French and Spanish, averaging 20,000 visitors per month. The web site was a central promotional and information tool, a news service for International Year of Mountains activities and a distribution mechanism for communications materials, including background information for journalists, educators, the public and others interested in mountain issues. A mountain events calendar was maintained by the Mountain Forum and was made accessible from both the International Year of Mountains web site and that of the Mountain Forum. The specially created International Year of Mountains web site was also the primary vehicle for distribution of an electronic monthly news bulletin, toolkits, educational materials and graphics to national committees and other partners who were implementing their own communications programmes. As a result, many national committees adapted the International Year of Mountains logo their own languages and some 30 national committees established special web sites in observance of the Year.

62. The International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit also implemented an intensive global media relations programme to build awareness of the Year's key messages through newspapers, magazines, radio and television, while its outreach programme helped NGOs, civil society and grass-roots organizations around the world communicate about mountain issues to their members and audiences. The Unit also supported the coordination, planning and implementation of major global events. These included the successful global launch of the International Year of

Mountains at United Nations Headquarters on 11 December 2001, the High Summit 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit.

D. Networking and information exchange

63. The scope of networking and information exchange about mountains at the regional and international levels has significantly progressed since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, most notably through the creation of Mountain Forum in 1995.

64. Mountain Forum is an electronic network that promotes and advocates global action towards equitable and ecologically sustainable mountain development. This is achieved through information exchange, mutual support and advocacy. Mountain Forum played a particularly significant role during the International Year of Mountains by enabling links between individuals, NGOs, Governments and other entities, particularly at the regional level, and by facilitating and moderating electronic consultations on the thematic papers that helped to develop the Bishkek Mountain Platform. It assisted with the establishment and operation of many national committees for the Year, conducted training sessions and participated in numerous global meetings. The Forum also maintained the official calendar of events for the Year through its Global Information Server Node hosted by The Mountain Institute. In addition, Mountain Forum is helping to adapt overall strategies to the specific conditions of different mountain areas and to ensure that information about local experiences is disseminated and shared amongst a wide audience.

65. Other regional-level networking mechanisms played an important role during the Year in strengthening cooperation across countries and regions. In Latin America, for example, the Andean Mountains Association and the Latin American Technical Cooperation Network on Watershed Management, supported by FAO, focused the skills and experience of scholars, educators, researchers and practitioners on collaborative action. The African Mountains Association, in close collaboration with Mountain Forum and other partners, performed a similar function on the African continent, as did the Asia-Pacific Mountain Network in the Asian and Pacific region. Notable examples in Europe include Euromontana, which has members in about 15 countries in all the European mountain massifs and facilitates collaboration between Western, Central and Eastern Europe and Mountain Xchange, which exchanges capacities, products and specific expertise to mountainous regions in Europe and around the world. The *Eurasia Mountain Newsletter*, published in Russian under Project 6 of the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB-6), fostered networking in Russia and the newly independent States.

E. International action

66. A large number of international organizations launched mountain-related initiatives or integrated mountains into their programmes of work for the Year and beyond.

67. Several notable global initiatives were begun and many existing projects and programmes received additional impetus as a result of the Year. FAO and other

partners such as UNESCO, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations and the European Observatory of Mountain Forests collaborated on an initiative entitled "Preparing the next generation of watershed programmes", the aim of which is to contribute to a better understanding of the current status of watershed management and provide support for the implementation of effective watershed management at the local, national and regional levels. The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research renewed its system-wide Global Mountain Programme (including centres such as the International Livestock Research Institute, the International Center for Research in Agroforestry and the International Potato Center), whose activities range from empowering mountain inhabitants through the training of local professionals in the use of new tools and methods to systematizing eroding indigenous knowledge for future generations. FAO produced a study entitled "Towards a GIS-based analysis of mountain environments and populations", which finds that as many as 245 million rural mountain people in developing and transition countries may be at risk of, or actually experiencing, hunger. FAO also published a legislative study, entitled "Mountains and the law — emerging trends" and prepared a study on the importance of mountain fisheries and aquaculture. The Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment, a component of the DIVERSITAS programme, published *Mountain Biodiversity — a Global Assessment*. Its secretariat is playing a key role in preparing chapter 27 (mountain systems) of the global exercise, The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, Conditions and Trends. The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility and other partners, published a report entitled "Mountain watch — environmental change and sustainable development in mountains". It provides the first systematic assessment of mountain ecosystems, using a geographic information system (GIS) analysis of global data presented as a visual map-based overview. Organized by the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the 2002 World Disaster Reduction Campaign focused on the theme "Disaster reduction for sustainable mountain development", culminating in the International Day for Disaster Reduction on 9 October. The Mountain Research Initiative embarked on a research programme on biosphere reserves with UNESCO. IUCN — The World Conservation Union established a Mountain Initiative Task Force.

68. The Panos Institute launched its web site "mountain voices" with oral testimony from mountain regions around the world, backed by a series of reports. The journal, *Mountain Research and Development*, edited by the Centre for Development and Environment at the University of Berne, continued to be the principal publication reporting comprehensively on mountain-related issues, including the exchange of research results, approaches and experiences.

69. The Year enhanced understanding of the need for interdisciplinary research and information-sharing about mountains and stimulated the development of a comprehensive, global research agenda on mountains that will support decision-making and policy-making in years to come. Much impetus for research in mountains was created by the Abisko Conference, held in Sweden in June 2001, which reviewed research achievements in the 10 years since Rio, identified gaps in knowledge and set priorities for mountain research, which were published in 2002. A significant follow-up during the International Year of Mountains was the United Nations University International Symposium on Conservation of Mountain Ecosystems, held in Japan in February 2002. This global research meeting released a

report on the state of the world's mountains, with specific policy recommendations, and issued the 2002 Tokyo Declaration for the International Year of Mountains, which calls on the United Nations and other international and national organizations to work in partnership to address mountain issues and to promote working links among mountain scientists, mountain communities, decision makers and the general public.

V. Achievements

70. The International Year of Mountains was a celebration of mountain life and a springboard for long-term collaborative research and action to enhance the well-being of mountain peoples and conserve mountain ecosystems. The International Year of Mountains achieved significant results. It has ensured that a growing network of Governments, organizations, major groups and individuals around the world know that mountains are vital to life, wherever we live. In particular, the Year:

- Strengthened implementation of chapter 13 by identifying, through intensive international, regional, national and community dialogue, gaps in knowledge, ways of working and institutions
- Reinforced and expanded the alliance of organizations that are committed to implementing chapter 13 and consolidated the alliance through the launching of the voluntary International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions at the World Summit on Sustainable Development
- Focused global commitment to and resources for sustainable mountain development on a widely supported framework for action, expressed in the Bishkek Mountain Platform, to ensure more efficient and effective approaches to achieving the goals of chapter 13
- Led to the establishment, by Permanent Representatives to the United Nations, of the International Year of Mountains Focus Group,[5] which supported observance of and continues to animate follow-up to the Year
- Increased the accessibility, quantity and quality of information on mountains and mountain people, in so doing raising public awareness of the importance of mountains to the Earth's fundamental life-sustaining systems, of the fragility of mountain ecosystems, of the consequences of their degradation and of effective approaches to sustainable mountain development
- Enhanced understanding of the need for interdisciplinary research and information-sharing about mountains and stimulated the development of a comprehensive, global research agenda on mountains that will support decision-making and policy-making
- Heightened awareness of the need to safeguard and build on the traditional knowledge of mountain people and to respect indigenous practices, expertise and authorities
- Broadened understanding of the need for natural resource assessment of mountains, in particular water resources, and highlighted the need for effective watershed management at the local, national and regional levels

- Increased awareness of the necessity of developing risk management strategies for disaster reduction in unstable mountain environments
- Stimulated the establishment of 78 national committees and placed them as mechanisms for developing national strategic plans and policies to achieve sustainable mountain development
- Increased demand by countries for programmes and projects to achieve sustainable mountain development
- Increased donor interest in and support for long-term investment in mountain ecosystems and communities
- Broadened the diversity of organizations and individuals dedicated to sustainable mountain development and stimulated the development of new mountain initiatives and the integration of mountains into normative programmes
- Led to the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 57/245, in which the Assembly inter alia designated 11 December as International Mountain Day, as from 11 December 2003, and encouraged the international community on that day to organize events at all levels to highlight the importance of sustainable mountain development.

VI. Challenges

71. The key challenges to fostering the long-term action needed to implement chapter 13 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation following the International Year of Mountains are in the areas of national involvement and support to partnerships.

National involvement

72. The Year generated extensive national involvement in sustainable mountain development. Thanks to the efforts of the 78 national committees which led observance of the International Year of Mountains, real change in mountain regions is now a priority in countries around the world. Many countries are in the process of, or are committed to, developing and implementing national strategic plans for the sustainable development of their mountains and to participating in regional processes to protect mountain ranges. However, the future status of many committees remained unclear at the close of 2002. The survival and further development of these committees, whatever the institutional setting, may be key factors for achieving country-focused mountain development. It should also be noted that many countries with mountains did not form national committees or formally participate in the Year. The involvement of all these countries in the follow-up to the Year is crucial to achieving sustainable mountain development, given the transboundary nature of mountains and the reality that only countries have the power to implement national mountain strategies, to enact enabling policies and laws and to develop compensation mechanisms for environmental services and goods provided by mountain areas. Lowland countries should also be involved in future mountain-related activities because highland-lowland relationships, flows of investment and other factors mean that countries with mountains cannot undertake sustainable mountain development in isolation. Support is also needed for

subregional and regional initiatives that enable countries to work together on the development and conservation of transboundary mountain ranges. Many countries lack the institutional environments, expertise and financial resources to implement and invest in sustainable mountain development. Education, training, institutional and human capacity-building, technology development and transfer, expert consultation and investment are required.

Partnership support

73. The strengthening of partnerships and, in particular, support for the development of the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions, provide opportunities to enhance the effectiveness and focus of common efforts to implement chapter 13. However, these mechanisms require improved leadership and coordination, mountain-specific information databases, communication and information-sharing, monitoring and evaluation to achieve lasting results. The scope of the International Year of Mountains was in many cases limited by the resources made available. This highlights a wider and continuing constraint on effective implementation of chapter 13 and on maintaining and building upon the investment in the Year. Mountain regions should play key roles in addressing the world's social, environmental and economic problems. However, this requires increased and more effectively applied investment. Greater and more effective mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of sustainable mountain development programmes and activities which have been proposed at all levels is a major challenge still to be met.

VII. Recommendations

74. **Significant progress has been achieved by the International Year of Mountains. It enabled crucial steps to be taken to heighten awareness about the importance of mountains to life on Earth and served as a catalyst for long-term, effective action to implement chapter 13, as intended. But much action is still needed. The International Year of Mountains is over but the challenges facing mountain environments and mountain peoples remain. The present momentum needs to be sustained in order to consolidate and build on results achieved so far. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to consider the following courses of action that could be taken by Governments:**

(a) **Encouraging the United Nations system to enhance efforts to strengthen inter-agency collaboration to achieve more effective implementation of chapter 13, Agenda 21 and paragraph 42 of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation;**

(b) **Supporting the continued establishment and development of mountain-related national committees, focal points and other multi-stakeholder mechanisms at the national level for sustainable mountain development;**

(c) **Supporting national efforts to develop goals and strategic plans for the sustainable development of mountains, as well as enabling policies and laws, programmes and projects;**

(d) **Supporting transboundary approaches to sustainable development of mountain ranges and information-sharing;**

(e) Promoting the production of mountain disaggregated information and the establishment of databases to capitalize on knowledge to support interdisciplinary research, programmes and projects for informed decision-making and planning;

(f) Supporting the development and implementation of global, regional and national communications programmes to build on the awareness and momentum for change established by the International Year of Mountains;

(g) Supporting capacity-building and education programmes to enhance awareness of good practices in sustainable mountain development and the nature of relationships between highland and lowland areas;

(h) Supporting the strengthening of mountain women's right to resources and their role in their communities and cultures, and giving consideration to the recommendations of the Thimpu Declaration of the Celebrating Mountain Women conference;

(i) Supporting the efforts of the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions and the implementation of the Bishkek Mountain Platform at the international, regional and national levels and encouraging countries, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to join the Partnership;

(j) Encouraging donor and United Nations mechanisms, such as the Global Environment Facility and the Global Mechanism (in dryland mountains), as well as private-sector investment in sustainable mountain development and the conservation of mountain ecosystems.

Notes

[1] The former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

[2] The International Year of Mountains Focus Group is comprised of representatives of Austria, Bhutan, Bolivia, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Iceland, Italy, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Peru, Slovenia and Switzerland.

[3] A formal proposal for a new International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions was finalized during the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Bali, Indonesia, 27 May-June 2002).

[4] As of June 2003, 32 countries, 15 intergovernmental organizations and 25 major groups had become members of the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions.

[5] In 2003, this was renamed the Mountain Focus Group.

United Nations A/58/135

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 July 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eight session
Item 95 (a) of the preliminary list*
Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: women in development

The empowerment of women and integration of gender perspectives in the promotion of economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 56/188 of 21 December 2001, examines the attention paid at recent United Nations conferences and summits to the concerns of women and gender equality goals in the context of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the promotion of economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development. The report also focuses on the utilization of existing planning and reporting mechanisms to promote, facilitate and monitor progress in the empowerment of women and the integration of gender perspectives in development at national levels, in follow-up to global commitments.

* A/58/50/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

03-42823 (E) 060803

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–5	3
II.	Progress towards women's empowerment and integration in development	6–11	4
III.	The contribution of global conferences and summits	12–40	5
	A. Millennium Declaration	13–17	5
	B. International Conference on Financing for Development	18–24	6
	C. World Summit on Sustainable Development	25–33	8
	D. World Summit on the Information Society	34–40	10
IV.	Tools for accelerating the empowerment of women and the integration of gender perspectives in development	41–56	11
	A. Millennium Development Goals reports at the country level	42–45	11
	B. Common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework	46–50	12
	C. Poverty reduction strategy papers	51–56	13
V.	Conclusions and recommendations	57–62	14

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 56/188 of 21 December 2001, the General Assembly reaffirmed that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth. The Assembly recognized that, although globalization and liberalization processes have created employment opportunities for women in many countries, they have made women, especially in the developing and least developed countries, more vulnerable to problems caused by increased economic volatility. The Assembly recommended increasing women's access to: economic and financial resources; decision-making positions at all levels; education and training; as well as access to and full participation in information and communication technologies (ICT). The Assembly urged Governments to develop and promote methodologies for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all aspects of policy-making, including economic policy-making. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on progress in the implementation of resolution 56/188.

2. Consideration of women in development within the framework of the General Assembly's work on economic and financial matters has provided an opportunity to highlight current and emerging issues and trends requiring action at the national, regional and international levels to ensure the full and effective participation of women in planning, implementing and monitoring development policies and programmes. Gender perspectives on issues such as macroeconomic policy-making, trade liberalization and resource allocation have been identified and addressed.

3. The most recent report on women in development, submitted to the General Assembly in 2001, focused on access to financial resources from a gender perspective. Women's access to bank financing, microcredit, equity financing and savings and insurance services were assessed. A number of recommendations on improving women's equal access to financial resources were provided. In view of the accelerating changes in the global economy, the report recommended that all aspects of financing for development be examined from a gender perspective.

4. Since the General Assembly's consideration of women in development in 2001, two major United Nations conferences have addressed gender perspectives within the frameworks of financing for development and sustainable development: the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in March 2002; and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002. The upcoming conference on the World Summit on the Information Society (to be held at Geneva in 2003 and in Tunisia in 2005) will provide an opportunity to address the issue of gender equality and ICT for development. Gender perspectives should be fully integrated into all follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of these conferences, as well as the Millennium Declaration. The centrality of women's contributions, and their priorities and needs, should be highlighted in these processes and gender-sensitive national policies and programmes should be developed in all areas.

5. The present report examines the attention paid at recent United Nations conferences and summits and in preparation for the forthcoming summit on ICT to women's concerns and gender equality goals in the context of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the promotion of economic growth, poverty

eradication and sustainable development. The report also focuses on the utilization of existing planning and reporting mechanisms to promote, facilitate and monitor progress in the integration of gender perspectives in development at national levels, in follow up to global commitments.

II. Progress towards women's empowerment and integration in development

6. Inequalities that impede women's empowerment and their full participation in development, including in economic development, persist worldwide. In no region of the world are women equal to men in legal, social and economic rights.[1] In all societies, gender relations play a key role in the division of labour, income, wealth, education, public goods and services. Gender gaps in access to and control over resources such as land and credit, in economic opportunities and in power and political voice are widespread. Resource allocation is often gender-biased within households as well as in the context of local and national budgets. Gender bias can be perpetuated through macroeconomic policies, trade policies and labour-market policies.[2]

7. Income disparities, labour market discrimination, high unemployment and high incidence of poverty among women persist in both developed and developing countries.[3] In many countries women continue to have less access to productive resources and social services than men, and girls are less likely to attend school than boys in low-income countries.[4] These inequalities are obstacles to economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development.

8. Despite the progress made in terms of women's increased participation in the labour force, women still have unequal opportunities in gaining access to formal and well-remunerated work. The informal sector represents a more important source of employment for women than for men in most of the countries where data is available.[5] Women have suffered disproportionately from the slowdown of the global economy in terms of job losses and a shift to more precarious forms of employment, which has led to a lowering of average wages in areas where women occupy jobs previously filled by men.[6] Many women have become more vulnerable to poverty, particularly in countries where the burden of family subsistence and caring for the sick has increased dramatically as a result of HIV/AIDS.

9. Women's access to and ownership of land is pivotal to sustainable livelihoods. Recent figures from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) show that, despite their active participation in agricultural work, women have limited access to land and credit. Fewer than 10 per cent of women farmers in India, Nepal and Thailand own land. An analysis of credit schemes in five African countries found that women received less than 10 per cent of the credit awarded to male smallholders. Only 15 per cent of the world's agricultural extension agents are women.[7]

10. Serious gender inequalities persist in relation to economic policies and programmes and in access to political and economic decision-making. The underrepresentation of women in political decision-making at all levels is a continuing concern in many parts of the world. While women have the right to vote in almost all countries in the world, they women continue to experience difficulties

in exercising this right. Currently, the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments stands at 15.2 per cent.[8] There is little systematic data collection on women's representation at different levels of government and in economic decision-making bodies.

11. Violence against women continues to be a major human rights concern and an obstacle to sustainable development. Trafficking in women and girls for sexual exploitation is one of the fastest growing areas of organized crime. Trafficked women and girls are subject to violence and serious violations of their human rights. In situations of armed conflict and their aftermath, women and girls are vulnerable to all forms of violence, particularly sexual violence and exploitation.

III. The contribution of global conferences and summits

12. United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit, have been instrumental in highlighting the cross-cutting nature of gender issues and their relevance for sustainable development, including economic growth and poverty eradication. Commitments to women's empowerment and gender equality have been made by Governments and recommendations for action at international, regional and national levels adopted. Greater attention has to be given to enhancing the implementation of the policies, norms and recommendations already in place, and to monitoring progress.

A. Millennium Declaration

13. The United Nations Millennium Declaration,[9] adopted at the Millennium Summit on 8 September 2000, embodies the common vision of the Member States of the United Nations for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.[10] In the Millennium Declaration, the international community reiterated the commitments made at the global conferences in the 1990s to improve the lives of all human beings in the new millennium and focused attention on implementation of those commitments through the establishment of measurable targets.

14. The Millennium Declaration recognized the need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate truly sustainable development. Gender equality is viewed not only as an important development goal in and of itself, but also as critical to the achievement of other development goals. The importance of ensuring the equal human rights of women and men and the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was also highlighted in the Declaration.

15. Eight Millennium Development Goals were formulated to facilitate achievement of the commitments in the Millennium Declaration, focusing on: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development. Targets and indicators were established to monitor progress towards the achievement of the commitments made.

16. The specific Millennium Development Goal on gender equality aims to promote gender equality and empower women, with the explicit target of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels of education no later than 2015. The four indicators to measure the achievement of the goal focus on the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; the ratio of literate females to males, 15 to 24 years of age; the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; and the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments. Progress towards achieving the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women should be assessed in relation to each of the other Millennium Development Goals, which are mutually reinforcing. Success in other development goals will have positive impacts on gender equality just as progress towards gender equality will help further the achievement of other goals. Gender perspectives need to be explicitly outlined in discussions of poverty and hunger, education, maternal and child mortality, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, environmental sustainability and partnerships for development.

17. The first report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/57/270 and Corr.1) indicated that the prospects for meeting the commitments and targets, given the current trends, were mixed, with marked differences between and within regions. The report noted that gender inequalities at all levels of education continued to hinder economic development and social equity. While women had made some gains in wage employment, gender inequalities in relation to political power remained problematic, as reflected in the low levels of representation of women in parliaments. In relation to maternal mortality, in the two regions with the highest rates, sub-Saharan Africa and south-central Asia, insignificant progress had been made to reach the target by 2015.

B. International Conference on Financing for Development

18. The International Conference on Financing for Development was the first United Nations-sponsored summit to address key financial and related issues pertaining to global development in an integrated way. Five financial mechanisms to provide resources for development were examined: domestic resource mobilization, foreign direct investment (FDI), trade, debt, and official development assistance (ODA). Systemic issues and institutional arrangements to enhance the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financing and trading systems in support of development, were also addressed. The outcome of the International Conference, the Monterrey Consensus,[11] established a platform for a new global alliance for development, encompassing all relevant actors at the global, regional and national levels.[12]

19. There is increasing recognition that financing for development must address both economic and social development issues. The neglect of the social outcomes, including gender implications, of macroeconomic policies has a broad negative impact on the development processes, making such policies less encompassing, less participatory, less sustainable and indifferent to social costs of economic growth.[13] Economists increasingly recognize that gender analysis of macroeconomic policies, including taxation, trade, investment and financial policies, is necessary to ensure mobilization of resources to meet the needs and priorities of all the poor, including women.

20. The Monterrey Consensus called for mainstreaming a gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the global economic system's support for development. It recognized that gender equality is one of the essential elements of good governance and that empowerment of women is a priority in economic development. The Consensus called for gender-sensitive investments in basic economic and social infrastructure in recognition of the importance of social and economic aspects in combating poverty and ensuring sustainable development. It also stressed the importance of microfinance and credit schemes and advocated gender-budget policies.

21. Participants at the multi-stakeholder round tables organized at the International Conference on Financing for Development expressed the view that insufficient attention had been paid to social issues such as gender mainstreaming and noted that the Monterrey Consensus could have been more explicit in addressing the social agenda and the financing of social programmes, particularly in the rural sector.[14] The recommendations on gender equality in the Monterrey Consensus are mainly provided in the context of domestic mobilization of financial resources for development. While all of the references and recommendations on gender equality in the Consensus are critical, it is equally important to identify and address the gender perspectives in international policies and programmes, including on trade and ODA. Microfinance initiatives are important measures for increasing women's access to resources, but they do not, in and of themselves, remove the obstacles women face in securing full access to resources and markets. The mainstreaming of gender perspectives into budget processes at the local and national level is a critical strategy for: furthering economic democracy, transparency and accountability; ensuring the policy commitments are matched by resources; and empowering women. Addressing macroeconomic policies and land reform from a gender perspective is also essential for women's empowerment and economic independence and productivity.

22. Research has shown that economic development policies that do not take gender perspectives into account, combined with the underrepresentation of women in economic decision-making, can exacerbate gender inequalities and hinder economic growth. A more comprehensive analysis of the gender perspectives of macroeconomic frameworks is required. Globalization, especially its trade liberalization and privatization aspects, has differential impacts on women and men, affecting, in particular, the sustainable livelihoods of women in rural areas. While some women have benefited from new opportunities provided by globalization processes, in many cases the shift to cash crop production from subsistence agriculture has had negative effects on access to resources and services and household food security, which have disproportionately affected rural women. The privatization of services can also lead to job losses, particularly for women. Higher prices for services can result in heavier burdens , especially for poor households. The differential effects of import liberalization and export promotion on women and men in terms of level of job security, earnings and employment conditions also need to be considered.

23. The follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development, which focuses on increased cooperation among the international financial institutions, the United Nations system and other major actors in the field of development, must address these remaining challenges to the integration of gender

perspectives in financing for development. Follow-up meetings, such as the high-level meetings of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, could include a focus on identifying and addressing gender perspectives in all areas discussed.

24. The special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization in April 2003, one year after the adoption of the Monterrey Consensus, focused on increased coherence, coordination and cooperation for its implementation at all levels. Some participants stressed that the cross-cutting nature of human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women should be recognized as critical to the achievement of all development goals. The importance of improved access to credit, including microcredit, to the realization of the entrepreneurial capacities of men and women was raised. Participants also pointed to the need to incorporate human rights, environmental and gender perspectives into trade policies.[15]

C. World Summit on Sustainable Development

25. Since the holding of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the adoption of Agenda 21 in 1992, the concept of sustainable development has increasingly integrated the three essential dimensions of development: economic development; social development; and environmental protection; including a strong focus on poverty eradication. The Johannesburg Declaration of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,[16] confirmed the commitment of Governments to ensure that women's empowerment, emancipation and gender equality are integrated into all activities encompassed within Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.[17] In the Plan of Implementation, it was recognized that the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit should benefit all, in particular women, youth, children and vulnerable groups. It further acknowledged that gender equality is among one of the elements that form the basis for sustainable development. This renewed commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality is important because of women's central role in social development, poverty eradication, natural resource management and their, often unrecognized, critical contributions to economic development at all levels.

26. To achieve the goal of poverty eradication, the need to promote women's equal access to and full participation in decision-making at all levels and to mainstream gender-perspectives in all policies and strategies was highlighted in the Plan of Implementation. It called for the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women and the improvement of the status, health and economic welfare of women and girls through full and equal access to economic opportunity, land, credit, education and health-care services. It also called for access to agricultural resources for people living in poverty, especially women and indigenous communities, and for an increase in decent employment, credit and income for the urban poor through appropriate national policies promoting equal opportunities for women and men.

27. Among the measures recommended to change unsustainable patterns of consumption and production were actions to provide information for both men and women about available energy sources and technologies. With respect to promoting

and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, specific attention was drawn to the issue of women and gender equality in a number of areas, including: water and sanitation; infrastructure and service development; rural development; agriculture; and nutrition and food security.

28. When addressing health and sustainable development, attention was focused on women in terms of, inter alia: the causes of ill health, including environmental causes; the impact on development; ensuring equal access to health-care services, giving particular attention to maternal and emergency obstetric care; promoting healthy living, including reproductive and sexual health; transfer and dissemination of technologies for safe water, sanitation and waste management for rural and urban areas; reduction of HIV/AIDS, reduction of respiratory diseases and other health impacts resulting from air pollution; and provision of affordable energy to rural communities.

29. In reviewing actions aimed at sustainable development, the Plan of Implementation specifically drew attention to: the promotion of gender equality in the African region when addressing the right to development; dealing effectively with natural disasters and conflicts, including their humanitarian and environmental impacts; and securing equitable access to land tenure, clarifying resource rights and responsibilities and providing access to credit.

30. In addressing internationally agreed development goals, steps were called for to avoid any unilateral measure that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries, in particular women and children. The Plan of Implementation reiterated the goal of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, and at all levels of education no later than 2015, through gender mainstreaming and the creation of a gender-sensitive educational system. Further work on indicators for sustainable development by countries at the national level, including integration of gender aspects, was encouraged.

31. The Economic and Social Council was called on to intensify its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of its activities concerning the coordinated implementation of Agenda 21. At the national level, women's full and equal participation in policy formulation and decision-making was encouraged, as well as the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all activities designed to enhance national institutional arrangements for sustainable development, including at the local level.

32. A number of gender equality issues will require further attention in the follow-up to the World Summit. The continued lack of access by women to land and productive resources in rural areas remains a major obstacle to the achievement of sustainable development. In the process of implementation of the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation it will be important to incorporate gender perspectives into all strategies and action plans at both the national and international levels, in order that specific actions and/or targets on gender equality can be established.

33. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eleventh session in 2003, in outlining its future programme, organization and methods of work, recognized the need for gender balance in participation and the integration of gender aspects in the development of indicators and identified gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in

all thematic clusters in its work programme for 2004-2017. Within this context, the Commission can play a key role in ensuring that gender perspectives are taken into account in the implementation of the commitments made in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The preparations for the thematic cluster for 2004-2005 on water, sanitation and human settlements will be important for developing an effective approach for ensuring the gender equality concerns are fully integrated as a cross-cutting issue.

D. World Summit on the Information Society

34. In 2000, the Economic and Social Council adopted a ministerial communiqué on the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based economy. The Millennium Declaration emphasized the urgency of ensuring that the benefits of new technologies, especially ICT, be available to all. Little work had been done at the international level to understand the connection between ICT and gender equality before the Commission on the Status of Women considered the issue at its forty-seventh session in March 2003.

35. ICT provides unique opportunities for economic growth and human development and facilitates access to financial markets, improved employment opportunities and increased productivity. Recent research has shown that information and communication technologies are improving women's economic livelihoods by expanding access to local and international markets for women producers and traders and increasing access to jobs, education and training and entrepreneurial opportunities. Women are taking advantage of the increased flexibility in employment conditions to combine roles in the care economy with professional roles.[18]

36. However, while some women have gained access to ICT, and are using these technologies effectively, many women encounter socio-economic, cultural and political barriers that deny them the benefits of the new technologies, as well as opportunities for active participation in shaping the information society. These barriers have led to a gender divide within the existing digital divide between the developed and developing countries. Women can be excluded from participation in the information economy due to lower levels of education, high rates of illiteracy compared with men and lack of ICT training. Persistent cultural constraints, such as stereotypical views of the roles of men and women, and lack of proficiency in English the dominant language in the field of computer software, are also contributing factors that hamper women's full participation.

37. Occupational segregation exists within the ICT industry. Women tend to be concentrated in end-user, lower skilled and lowest paid jobs related to information processing, banking, insurance, printing and publishing, and in outsourced jobs for women in call centres, information services, data entry, geographical information systems and software programming. Women make up a small percentage of managerial, maintenance and design personnel in networks, operating systems and software. More women are becoming software programmers, but very few work in hardware design. Women have rarely reached high-level positions in information technology at the technical, managerial or decision-making levels.[19]

38. While ICT in and of themselves cannot create gender equality or end poverty, they can be powerful tools for positive social change towards gender equality.[20] The

integration of gender perspectives into policy and planning processes is critical for ensuring that gender disparities in the information age are addressed and that women are empowered to take full advantage of ICT. Most national ICT policies, plans and programmes have not paid attention to gender perspectives, and women's priorities and needs have not been considered.

39. The agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women[21] provide a set of actions and recommendations to improve women's access to and participation in information communication technologies. The agreed conclusions addressed women's equal access to ICT-based economic activities and employment, for example through telecentres, information centres and business incubators. The Commission stressed the importance of ICT for the economic, political and social empowerment of women as leaders, participants and consumers.

40. The World Summit on the Information Society, which is to be held at Geneva in 2003 and in Tunisia in 2005, aims to develop a common vision and understanding of the information society.[22] Gender perspectives should be integrated in all areas covered by the Summit. The agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on ICT were transmitted to the President of the Preparatory Committee and the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union, with a view to ensuring attention to gender perspectives and a focus on gender equality in the Summit and its outcome. Gender-sensitive implementation of the outcome of the Summit will be critical in the pursuit of the gender equality goal in the field of ICT at the national level.

IV. Tools for accelerating the empowerment of women and the integration of gender perspectives in development

41. There is a renewed commitment to the implementation of internationally agreed goals contained in the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of major conferences and summits. The goals and targets provide a comprehensive basis for action at the national, regional and international levels with the key objectives of poverty eradication and sustainable development. The Millennium Development Goals reports at the country level, common country assessments, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and poverty reduction strategy papers have been identified as useful instruments for facilitating the coordinated and integrated implementation and monitoring of the internationally agreed goals and targets.

A. Millennium Development Goals reports at the country level

42. In an effort to assess implementation of the Millennium Declaration at the national level, national Governments are encouraged to prepare periodic reports on progress in achieving the goals and targets, in order to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the national strategies and United Nations support for those strategies. The Millennium Development Goals reports at the country level, which should build on existing planning and reporting mechanisms at national level, serve as benchmarks to analyse trends and to identify achievements, challenges and

obstacles on a country-by-country basis. The reports can be an important tool for awareness raising, advocacy, alliance building and developing national capacity for monitoring and reporting on goals and targets. The production of the reports can foster public debate at national and local levels on specific development priorities and can lead to policy reform, institutional changes and resource allocation. These reports can function as useful instruments for assessing the extent to which gender perspectives are taken into consideration in national development policies and plans.

43. An initial assessment of the available Millennium Development Goals reports[23] indicates that most countries reported on measures taken to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. The focus on gender equality in the reports was, however, limited to specific sectors such as education and health, including HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, and, to a lesser extent, on the economy and political participation. The focus in the reports on macroeconomics issues did not adequately consider the impact on women and gender equality.

44. In relation to Millennium Development Goal 3, on gender equality and empowerment of women, the majority of the reports indicated that equal access to education was a priority, with most countries presenting comprehensive policies and programmes aimed at achieving universal primary education for boys and girls. A few countries broadened the focus to include not only education but also measures to achieve gender equality in other areas, such as the economy, the judiciary and political decision-making.

45. Countries reported a lack of data on gender equality in key areas, as well as gaps in the availability of data disaggregated by sex, which hinder effective follow-up of national policies and programmes from a gender perspective. Constraints faced in relation to data collection and analysis and the need for assistance in this area were raised.

B. Common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework

46. The common country assessment (CCA) is a common instrument of the United Nations system, used to analyse the status of national development and to identify key development challenges. The assessment takes into account national priorities, within the framework of the goals, commitments and targets of the Millennium Declaration and international conferences and summits. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process provides an integrated United Nations system response to national priorities and needs.

47. A number of assessments of gender perspectives in CCAs and UNDAFs revealed that efforts have been made to address gender issues in these processes, but there have been constraints and challenges.[24] Analyses and recommendations contained in the CCA/UNDAFs reviewed tended to focus on women's concerns in education, health and the microeconomy. Economic policies and programmes, for example in finance, taxation, industry and formal and informal sector employment, rarely reflected gender perspectives. Critical areas for women, agriculture, livestock and animal husbandry, transport, water, environment and housing, were not adequately addressed from a gender perspective.

48. While many of the CCA/UNDAFs assessed did make reference to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action, few explicitly defined how issues emanating from these processes were taken into account in the analyses and strategies. In the CCA/UNDAFs reviewed, there were no specific references to the national action plans and strategies for implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, developed after the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, and updated for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in 2000.

49. Many CCA/UNDAFs referred to the feminization of poverty and women's vulnerability without further gender analysis or recommendations for actions. The challenges facing women, such as the impoverishment of many women and the inequalities they face in relation to human rights, participation and decision-making, were recognized. However, the underlying causes of gender inequality and women's vulnerability were often not analysed and actions to address the situation were not formulated.

50. It was noted that where gender equality goals are explicit in national strategies and plans they are more likely to be addressed in CCA/UNDAFs. The lack of sex-disaggregated data was highlighted as a constraint, as well as the fact that much of the data available was considerably out of date. While the national machineries for women participated in thematic working groups and workshops, the effectiveness of participation varied. Many of the national machineries required capacity-building on gender mainstreaming in order to make effective contributions.

C. Poverty reduction strategy papers

51. Poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPS) provide an overview of a country's economic and social policies and programmes to promote economic growth and reduce poverty, as well as associated external financing needs. PRSPs are prepared by Governments through a participatory process involving civil society and development partners, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). PRSPs assist Governments in identifying economic and social policies that promote economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development.

52. Efforts have been made by the United Nations specialized agencies, the World Bank and bilateral organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to facilitate consideration of women's concerns and gender perspectives in the PRSP processes. A number of reviews of PRSPs from a gender perspective have been carried out. In 2001, the World Bank carried out an assessment of gender mainstreaming in the PRSPs because of evidence that gender-based inequalities slow economic growth and poverty reduction and tend to be most extreme in the lowest income countries and poorest households.[25] Nineteen interim PRSPs and four full PRSPs were examined to determine the degree to which gender issues were included in the four core elements of the PRSPs (diagnosis; public actions; monitoring; and consultative process) and in the areas of health, nutrition and population; education; labour markets; agriculture; safety nets; infrastructure; governance; and financial services.

53. The review indicated that, in general, the integration of gender perspectives into the PRSP process had been minimal. Although a number of interim and completed PRSPs treated gender issues in specific areas in some depth, the overall

coverage was weak and there were many missed opportunities for enhancing poverty reduction. Gender issues in productive activities (agriculture, financial services, labour markets and infrastructure); safety nets, governance and legal issues were rarely addressed. Few interim PRSPs included specific plans for gender analysis or for gender-inclusive consultations.

54. Another study on PRSPs in March 2003,[28] found that gender equality was not considered seriously as a determinant of poverty, although differentials in access of women and men to economic and social services were discussed in all the PRSPs analysed. The PRSPs did not taken into account many of the key priorities of women, such as maternal health services, support for food production and marketing within the country and eradication of gender discriminatory practices within social services and economic infrastructure. The PRSPs focused on the market economy without recognition of the gender implications and the household economy, which is of critical importance for women, was neglected. The sections of the PRSPs outlining gender-specific indicators for monitoring implementation were weak.

55. The study found that civil society involvement, including women's groups and networks, in the preparation of the PRSPs was limited. Time was insufficient to allow for development of PRSPs based on gender-sensitive data collection and analysis of poverty, or to initiate consultation with a wide range of civil society actors, including women's groups and networks. Although the process of consultation had often failed to take into consideration the barriers to women's effective involvement, NGOs advocating for gender had the biggest impact on the PRSP processes reviewed. National machineries for women were involved in PRSPs to varying degrees.

56. Efforts were being made by NGOs, women's national machineries and donor agencies to address these weaknesses in the PRSP process, including broadening the debate on what constitutes poverty to incorporate a more gender-sensitive diagnosis and allow for a better understanding of the differences in the causes and nature of, and impact of poverty on, men and women. Other positive follow-up activities have included gender analysis of completed PRSPs and the development of tools for mainstreaming in future PRSPs.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

57. **There is increased recognition that the achievement of development goals, including in economic development, is contingent on the full participation of women as well as men and the identification of gender perspectives in all areas and at all levels. Recent United Nations conferences and summits have made some progress in integrating women's concerns and gender perspectives into the preparatory processes and final outcomes. The significant contributions of women to development, as well as their priorities, constraints and needs, have been highlighted in these processes. Gender perspectives in many areas are still, however, not sufficiently identified and addressed.**

58. **Because of continuing inequalities and discrimination, women are in extremely vulnerable situations in many parts of the world, as demonstrated by the level of violence against women, trafficking in women and girls, the impact of armed conflict on women and the continued predominance of women among the poorest of the poor. This should not mean, however, that women are only**

seen as victims and vulnerable groups. The specific vulnerabilities of women and girls need to be identified and addressed as abuses of women's human rights and constraints to sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development is dependent on the recognition of women as well as men as key actors and agents of change. The critical inputs of women in peace and security, poverty eradication, environmental protection and promoting democracy and effective governance must be recognized and actively promoted and facilitated.

59. Progress in bringing women's concerns and gender perspectives to the fore in global policy-making processes has to be translated into practical action at national levels. A strong focus on implementation of policies, norms and recommendations is required, utilizing, to the greatest extent possible, existing planning and monitoring mechanisms in a coordinated and integrated manner. Much remains to be done to ensure the empowerment of women and integration into development at the national level through effective, gender-sensitive policies and programmes.

60. The integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development is required, taking into account the contributions, priorities and needs of all stakeholders, including both women and men, through a consultative and participatory process. This approach would ensure a coordinated and integrated follow-up to major summits and conferences, with gains for the achievement of all development goals and targets, including those on women's empowerment and gender equality.

61. The General Assembly may wish to call on all relevant actors, Governments, the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, NGOs and civil society, to ensure:

(a) Increased consideration of gender perspectives in follow-up activities to the International Conference on Financing for Development, including the High-Level Dialogue of the General Assembly on Financing for Development, on 29 and 30 October 2003;

(b) Explicit incorporation of gender perspectives in all thematic clusters in the multiyear programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, including in relation to the thematic cluster for 2004-2005 on water, sanitation and human settlements;

(c) Explicit attention to monitoring of progress in empowering women and incorporating gender perspectives in all reports on implementation of commitments made in global conferences and summits;

(d) Attention to gender perspectives in all aspects of the preparations for and outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, to ensure that gender inequalities related to ICT are identified and addressed at the national level, and that women are empowered to take full advantage of ICT;

(e) More effective and integrated utilization of existing planning and monitoring instruments, such as the Millennium Development Goals reports at the country level, CCA/UNDAFs, national human development reports and PRSPs, to promote and monitor the empowerment of women and integration of gender perspectives in development processes and ensure explicit attention to gender perspectives in all reporting processes.

62. **The General Assembly may wish to encourage Governments, in collaboration with the United Nations, international and regional organizations, NGOs and civil society, to:**

(a) **Explicitly incorporate gender perspectives in their implementation strategies and action plans in follow-up to all United Nations global conferences and summits and develop gender-sensitive targets and indicators and effective monitoring mechanisms;**

(b) **Develop capacity-building in gender mainstreaming to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into national policies and programmes in all areas;**

(c) **Take steps to ensure that data required for gender analysis is collected, that data is sex-disaggregated and that, in identifying and monitoring indicators and targets, gender perspectives are taken into consideration;**

(d) **Systematically involve the national machineries for women and utilize the existing national action plans and strategies for implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, in the preparation of Millennium Development Goals reports, CCAs/UNDAFs, national human development reports and PRSPs.**

Notes

[1] The World Bank, Gender and Development Group, *Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals*, 4 April 2003.

[2] Nilüfer Cağatay, *Trade, Gender and Poverty*, United Nations Development Programme, October 2001.

[3] *Report on the World Social Situation, 2001* (United Nations Sales publication, ST/ESA/277-E/2001/70).

[4] World Bank, 2002, *Engendering Development*.

[5] International Labour Office, *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture*, Geneva 2002.

[6] United Nations, *Report on the World Social Situation, 2001* (see chapter on *Disparities in incomes and poverty*, para. 37).

[7] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Gender and Food Security: Agriculture, Facts and Figures*, Rome, 2003 (http://www.fao.org).

[8] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Women in National Parliaments* (www.ipu.org) (updated 3 July 2003).

[9] Resolution 55/2.

[10] A/57/270 and Corr.1.

[11] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.11.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[12] A/57/344, para. 5.

[13] A/56/321, para. 7.

[14] A/57/344, para. 36.

[15] A/58/77-E/2003/62.

[16] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August to 4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[17] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[18] E/CN.6/2003/6, para. 17.

[19] Ibid., para. 33.

[20] Ibid., para. 22.

[21] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 7* (E/2003/27), chap. I.A.III.

[22] Resolution 56/183.

[23] At the preparation of this report, 22 country reports were available. The reports were submitted during 2001, 2002 and 2003: Albania, Armenia, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Guinea, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nepal, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam.

[24] See, for example, *The gender perspective in the CCA/UNDAF and PRSP processes and priorities in West and Central Africa: an assessment report*, prepared for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) regional office in Abidjan, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the International Labour Organization (ILO) (undated); and the desk review, *Gender mainstreaming in the CCA and UNDAF process* (2003), which was commissioned by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Gender Mainstreaming in the CCA/UNDAF Process, of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality.

[25] World Bank, Gender and Development Group, *Gender in the PRSPs: A Stocktaking*, 9 August 2001.

[26] Emma Bell, *Gender and PRSPs: with experiences from Tanzania, Bolivia, Viet Nam and Mozambique*, BRIDGE Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, United Kingdom, 2003.

United Nations A/58/136

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 July 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session
Item 52 of the preliminary list*
2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, particularly in Africa

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, particularly in Africa — progress on implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/294

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared by the World Health Organization, provides an update on the status of implementation of recommendations made in General Assembly resolution 57/294 on the Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, particularly in Africa. The report, which draws significantly on the Africa Malaria Report — 2003, published in April 2003 by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund with contributions from the World Bank, reviews the state of resource mobilization and financing of malaria control, provides examples of successful ways in which malaria control has been incorporated into sector-wide approaches for health and development planning and describes efforts to strengthen the Roll Back Malaria partnership. The report concludes by proposing a number of recommendations for the consideration of the General Assembly to accelerate the implementation of malaria control activities.

* A/58/50/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

03-42735 (E) 310703

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–4	3
II.	Resource mobilization and financing for malaria control	5–24	4
III.	Use of all means available by malaria-endemic countries to tackle malaria	25–28	7
IV.	Next steps for financing malaria control in Africa	29–35	8
V.	Renewed commitment of United Nations agencies and others	36–39	9
VI.	Taxes and tariffs on mosquito nets — one indication of political commitment	40–42	9
VII.	Progress towards Abuja Goals	43–52	10
VIII.	Transfer of technology for production of treated nets and efforts to increase access to antimalarial medicines	53–62	12
IX.	Reducing risk of malaria transmission in development planning	63–72	14
X.	Plans for 2005 evaluation of progress in achieving Abuja Summit objectives	73–78	16
XI.	Conclusions and recommendations	79–81	17

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 57/294: 2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, particularly in Africa, the General Assembly called for support for the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/123). In summary, these were (a) a call for Member States, particularly those that have experienced the burden of malaria and managed to control or eliminate it, to join in solidarity with malaria-endemic countries, (b) to reinforce the intent of the Abuja Declaration and encourage malaria-endemic countries to eliminate or substantially reduce taxes and tariffs on mosquito nets, (c) advocate continued and increased support for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, (d) a call for malaria-endemic countries to address the malaria burden through all means available and (e) a call on United Nations agencies to renew their commitment to the Roll Back Malaria Initiative and its goals.

2. The resolution also appealed to the international community, United Nations bodies, international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations to allocate substantial new resources, including through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, particularly in Africa, with a view to enabling them to implement fully the plan of action adopted in Abuja for the Roll Back Malaria Initiative (RBM). In addition, it called for the international community and donor Governments to encourage and facilitate the transfer of needed technology to developing countries, particularly in Africa, on favourable terms, for the production of long-lasting insecticide-treated nets and to find ways to increase the availability of the new range of artemisinin-based combination drugs for multi-drug resistant malaria.

3. The resolution also urged the World Health Organization (WHO) and its partners to provide the necessary support for ongoing measures to combat malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, and to provide the assistance necessary for African States to meet their objectives. At the same time, the resolution called for joint and comprehensive efforts between Africa and the international community to ensure that by 2005 the targets established at Abuja in 2001 are met. Endemic countries were also called upon to ensure that measures to reduce the risk of malaria transmission, including source reduction and environmental management, are included in development planning and activities. The Secretary-General, in close collaboration with the Director General of WHO, was also requested to conduct in 2005 an evaluation of the measures taken and progress towards the achievement of the mid-term targets related to the overall goals of the Decade and to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

4. The World Health Organization and UNICEF jointly published a report entitled "The Africa Malaria Report — 2003", which was released on Africa Malaria Day, 25 April 2003 in a coordinated launch in Nairobi, Kenya, Washington, the United States of America and London, the United Kingdom. The report, the first of its kind, took stock of the malaria situation and of continuing efforts to tackle the disease in Africa and is based on a review of the best information available to WHO and UNICEF at the end of 2002. The World Bank contributed the chapter on resource mobilization and financing. The present report draws substantially on that report and on the contributions of many RBM partners.

II. Resource mobilization and financing for malaria control

5. Since the inception of Roll Back Malaria in 1998, and particularly since the Abuja Summit in 2000, malaria prevention and control have started once again to become domestic and international priorities. International spending for malaria has increased at least twofold since 1998, and this does not even include the complementary financing of a range of primary health care services (such as reproductive health and the integrated management of childhood illness) that also have an impact on malaria.

6. In 2002, approximately US$ 200 million was earmarked for malaria control worldwide, compared with an estimated US$ 60 million in 1998. Of the total in 2002, about US$ 70-80 million can be attributed to domestic commitments.

7. **Resources required to roll back malaria**: A broad resource base is essential to reduce the burden of malaria in Africa. Critical resources include financial and human resources, institutional know-how, political commitment, and community support. These resources are located in a diverse set of institutions including governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the international community, the private sector and civil society.

8. Harnessing and coordinating these resources require the development of consensus among potential partners and the formation of effective working relationships. The establishment of partnerships working towards a common goal is an integral part of the strategy to roll back malaria.

9. The Abuja Declaration of 2000 called for the allocation of new resources — at least US$ 1 billion per year — from African countries and their development partners. Although more resources are available for malaria control today than 3 years ago, a significantly greater investment is needed to support those fighting malaria on the ground. In 2000 and 2001, African heads of State pledged to allocate the resources required for sustained implementation of planned RBM actions, including significant increases to country health budgets. However, in order for additional investments to have an impact on malaria, countries must have mechanisms by which resources can be translated into effective programmes that reach those most in need. This requires functioning health systems that allocate appropriate resources to malaria programmes for recurrent costs and essential commodities (such as antimalarial drugs), administrative systems that ensure timeliness, regularity and accountability in the flow of funds, infrastructure and supplies for delivering services, a skilled and motivated work force, and sufficient organizational capacity to manage the system. In addition, an enabling environment is required to stimulate private sector growth to provide commodities for malaria prevention and treatment, such as insecticide-treated nets and antimalarial drugs.

10. **Domestic resources**: It is not possible to ascertain accurately the amount of government resources supporting malaria control. Malaria control today is financed through a range of complementary programmes that all have an impact on malaria. Public health activities, such as the integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI), reproductive health programmes and other primary health care services, all have direct positive impacts on malaria but are not recorded as expenditures attributed to malaria-control programmes. In addition, many malaria costs are covered by general budgets for health facility staff or drugs. In countries with a heavy malaria burden, the disease may account for as much as 25-40 per cent of

outpatient visits and up to 50 per cent of inpatient admissions, generating costs that may amount to as much as 40 per cent of public health expenditure.

11. Continued fiscal shortfalls faced by those working on malaria suggest that, despite progress, government resource allocations for malaria are still insufficient. Governments in African countries generally support public-sector salaries without providing resources for the other recurrent expenditures, such as antimalarial drugs, needed to deliver services. In addition, although the cost of achieving the scale of action required may be significant, human resources are required for expenditures to have an impact on reducing the burden of malaria. In many African countries today, however, shortages of trained personnel impede malaria control more than the lack of financial resources.

12. **Most people in Africa south of the Sahara pay out-of-pocket for malaria control**. Overwhelmingly, people in Africa south of the Sahara pay for malaria prevention and treatment through out-of-pocket expenditure. The lack of government resources for malaria prevention and treatment contributes to shifting the burden of expenditure to households. Evidence suggests that most of this expenditure is on pharmaceuticals, the costs of which will further rise with the introduction of new antimalarials made necessary by increasing resistance to current drugs. Measures should be taken to reduce the costs of these drugs, for instance through targeted subsidies.

13. Inevitably, the poorest households will spend a greater proportion of their income on malaria prevention and treatment. Strategies to mitigate the financial burden of malaria — particularly on the poorest households, those least likely to be able to afford the necessary expenditures — should be combined with appropriate communication and behaviour change activities both to reduce the costs of malaria-related commodities and to support appropriate use of those commodities.

14. **Household spending should be directed towards the most effective interventions**: Although household spending on malaria control is very high, it is not necessarily efficient. Most purchasing of malaria-control commodities occurs in the private sector — through local markets and drug vendors, for instance — with the result that individuals receive little guidance and may purchase and use poor-quality, inappropriate, or incomplete interventions. Significant expenditures on mosquito coils and insecticide aerosol sprays have been reported, but while these commodities reduce nuisance mosquitoes, there is little evidence that their use reduces the burden of malaria. Drug vendors may provide little guidance on treatment choice and usually will not encourage the completion of a full course of treatment, contributing to the development of parasite resistance.

15. Communication programmes designed to bring about behaviour change will play an essential role in guiding consumers towards the purchase of malaria-control interventions of demonstrated effectiveness in reducing malaria transmission, such as insecticide-treated materials and antimalarials to which resistance is less common.

16. **Planning for impact**: Several countries are well advanced in forming coalitions between partners that are working towards an agreed plan of action. The process differs from one country to another but some common themes are evident. The process usually starts with a situation analysis of the state of health sector development, as well as of the epidemiology of malaria. The analysis also identifies

the resources available to roll back malaria, including the diverse range of stakeholders already involved in malaria control. Formal partnerships are created and a statement of intent issued, indicating what will be achieved in 5 years, and how. Resources are mobilized from partners and systems are set up to monitor achievements in rolling back malaria. Forty African countries have drawn up national strategic plans, and at least 25 countries are ready to implement. Many of these plans have served as the basis for successful proposals to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria — and some are already receiving funds from this source to support implementation of the plans.

17. **Partnerships with industry are increasing resources for malaria**. The business community is increasingly playing a role in the Roll Back Malaria partnership and providing vital resources and expertise to support malaria control programmes. Partnerships have been forged with the drug industry, companies with major investments in malaria-endemic countries whose workers are at risk from malaria, and manufacturers of nets and insecticides. In addition, companies have provided funds for training and collaborating with young scientists and medical officers to allow them to gain valuable experience in the field.

18. **Understanding resource flows to improve effectiveness of expenditures**. Financial resources are only one part of resource mobilization. African countries and the international community need to place greater emphasis on understanding the flow of resources to actual malaria prevention and control activities. Expenditure analyses that track spending on malaria can elucidate the pathways that allow financing for malaria to overcome administrative bottlenecks and support essential services and commodities required for achieving impact.

19. Efforts to roll back malaria in Ethiopia, for instance, have been hampered by inefficiencies in the flow of scarce resources to malaria prevention and control activities. Total expenditure for malaria control is approximately US$ 10.25 million, or only US$ 0.35 per person at risk, but even these limited resources could have a greater impact on malaria control if they were reaching those most in need.

20. Through a recent malaria expenditure review in Ethiopia, commissioned by Roll Back Malaria, it is clear that different parts of the malaria-control programme are competing for the same scarce resources, leaving little room for transportation, antimalarials, and other recurrent operational costs. For example, public facility-based pharmacies, where patients can obtain drugs free of charge, are often out of stock of essential drugs, forcing patients to purchase drugs at private facilities. In addition, the allocation of funds across the different levels of the health sector that have contact with malaria patients may not be proportional to need.

21. Ethiopia has recently decentralized the delivery of health services but has not yet established sustainable management and financial structures within all levels of the health sector. However, the bottlenecks that impede effective resource flows for malaria have now been identified and malaria control is back on the Government agenda. With increases in management and implementation capacity, Ethiopia will be able to use effectively the approximately US$ 38 million in new financing from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. Further organizational and institutional strengthening, accompanied by political commitment and increased international support, will assist Ethiopia to use new and existing resources to better support effective malaria control measures.

22. Similar reviews of resource flows to malaria control should be undertaken in other countries in Africa south of the Sahara to make better use of existing resources and improve targeting of new resources, so that the impact of both domestic and donor resources can be maximized.

23. **International resources**. Despite the increased level of international financing, the amount of money available in most countries to control malaria is still inadequate. In most countries in Africa, government spending needs to be supported by increased international funding.

24. Although continued financial support from the international community for malaria control is essential, it is equally important for the international community to support countries in developing implementation capacity. For instance, donors should work with countries and the private sector to devise and implement innovative financing schemes — the use of targeting mechanisms, such as vouchers for insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) for instance — to improve financial flows to malaria control on the ground.

III. Use of all means available by malaria-endemic countries to tackle malaria

25. **Sector-wide approaches**. The United Republic of Tanzania is an example of a country where malaria control is integrated into a health sector-wide approach. The World Bank-funded Health Sector Development Programme Project in the United Republic of Tanzania broadly supports the first phase of the Health Sector Reform Programme of the country's Government. Although project financing is not specifically designated as malaria financing, the project's objectives have profound implications for resource mobilization for malaria. A target of reducing the malaria inpatient case-fatality rate for children under 5 from 12.8 per cent (1997) to 8 per cent (2011) has been included as a key indicator of success, and the Government has successfully allocated approximately US$ 10 million for malaria in 2003.

26. The potential flexibility and country ownership of sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) have dramatically changed the resource envelope for malaria in a number of African countries. As of February 2003, at least eight countries in Africa south of the Sahara have prioritized malaria through such approaches. With detailed district-level planning and coordination with sectoral funding cycles and planning meetings, additional resources for malaria prevention and control can be made available while the health sector as a whole is strengthened.

27. **The prioritization of malaria control in debt relief. A reflection of renewed importance**: The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative is the first international response to provide comprehensive debt relief to the world's poorest, most heavily indebted countries. The 26 countries that entered the HIPC programme, of which most are in Africa south of the Sahara, are saving an average US$ 1.3 billion per year compared with debt payments in 1998. Resources freed from debt are being used to support country-driven poverty-reduction strategies — in the form of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), which are developed by national Governments in consultation with civil society.

28. As of January 2003, PRSPs (and Interim PRSPs) in every country in Africa south of the Sahara note malaria as a significant contributor to poverty and stress the

importance of malaria control in their approaches to sustainable development. The prioritization of malaria in these documents will have tangible implications for financing malaria control. For instance, as of 2002, all World Bank activities in countries that have prepared poverty-reduction strategies must respond to the priorities detailed in the strategy. In addition, the Bank has developed Poverty Reduction Support Credits (PRSCs) to directly support implementation of a country's poverty-reduction strategy. Although the process is still relatively new, these resources have already been made available for malaria control in some countries, such as Cameroon.

IV. Next steps for financing malaria control in Africa

29. Countries have demonstrated commitment to RBM by pursuing the country strategic planning process. International expenditure directly financing malaria has risen dramatically, and additional support for malaria through sectoral financing schemes can be mobilized as required. In addition, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is an exciting new source for significant direct support for malaria control.

30. Countries should improve domestic health sector investment and management, including improved integration of malaria-control activities into health sector development efforts.

31. Policies that provide a greater resource base for health in general and malaria in particular must be pursued, including policies that promote equity of access to goods and services and facilitate the delivery of quality services at low cost through the private or commercial sector. Public sector linkages with the private sector and NGOs, through contracting out of services for instance, would allow countries to expand significantly the resource envelope for malaria activities.

32. Communications for behaviour change must coincide with resource mobilization activities to improve the efficiency of household spending on malaria prevention and control.

33. A significant portion of the financial burden from malaria falls on households. Though measures must be taken to mitigate the financial impact on the poorest, who are unable to afford such high levels of out-of-pocket expenditure, the prominent role of households in malaria control marks an opportunity as well. If, for instance, household expenditures were made only on appropriate and effective malaria prevention and treatment commodities, current spending could make a significant impact on the malaria burden. Behaviour change communications combined with innovative financing mechanisms would make the most of existing household expenditures.

34. The international community must assist countries and partners in spending increased resources for malaria effectively and demonstrating their impact.

35. Donors should work with Governments to improve management and organizational capacity for monitoring and evaluating resource flows, both human and financial. Existing resources do not always flow to those who need them most. It is essential that Governments respond by prioritizing malaria within their own health sector budgets to maximize the disbursement of domestic and international resources to prevent and control malaria. At the same time, the international

community must assist countries in the efficient and effective spending of available resources for malaria, such as those mobilized through health sector development programmes and the Global Fund. Public health success stories, such as the Onchocerciasis Control Programme and the polio eradication campaign, have depended on the combination of country commitment and international support translating into impact on the ground. There is good reason to believe that similar progress can be achieved in malaria.

V. Renewed commitment of United Nations agencies and others

36. The Roll Back Malaria partnership was launched in 1998 by the World Health Organization, the World Bank, UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme, but rapidly developed to include malaria-endemic countries, non-governmental organizations, representatives of the commercial and industrial sector and other partners.

37. Following an internal review and an external evaluation in 2002, steps were taken to strengthen the partnership and to restructure the secretariat for the partnership. At the same time, a new Malaria Control Department was established within WHO to lead the WHO contribution to the Roll Back Malaria partnership.

38. The restructured RBM partnership secretariat (RBM) will be primarily responsible for supporting the scaling-up operation of the RBM partnership, providing secretariat support to RBM partnership working groups, networking at different levels and linking with other health programs. For the first time partners are developing joint work plans and creating combined country support teams to intensify action. In addition the secretariat is identifying new sources of finance and methods to increase efficient use of available funds earmarked for malaria control at country level. The secretariat is also establishing systems that will enable more effective monitoring of the activities and impact of the partnership.

39. An RBM Partnership Board has been established to oversee, through its secretariat, the work of the partnership at large and to expand the number of partners. The RBM Partnership Board composition brings together all constituencies concerned with scaling-up malaria-control efforts at the country level.

VI. Taxes and tariffs on mosquito nets — one indication of political commitment

40. The cost of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) is a barrier to their widespread use. As one element in reducing prices, the Abuja Declaration committed Governments to "reduce or waive taxes and tariffs for nets and materials, insecticides, antimalarial drugs and other recommended goods and services that are needed for malaria control strategies". This policy of rationalizing taxes and tariffs is anticipated to contribute to lower prices, so that more people can afford ITNs and stimulate the growth of the commercial market for ITNs. The long-term vision for RBM is a vibrant and competitive commercial sector supported by a functional public-private partnership for making nets and insecticides accessible and affordable to populations at risk of malaria infection, especially those groups at highest risk for severe malaria.

41. Eighteen countries have now reduced or eliminated taxes and tariffs on mosquito nets. Two countries (Tanzania and Zimbabwe) had begun to reduce taxes and tariffs immediately prior to the Abuja summit in April 2000, four countries made changes prior to Africa Malaria Day 2001, and a further twelve countries had made progress by Africa Malaria Day 2002. Within the past year, the Governments of Mali and Madagascar have taken additional steps to remove taxes related to insecticide-treated mosquito nets and insecticide treatment products. Time-limited changes in tax or tariff regimes can be introduced through informal agreements between health and finance ministries, but more permanent arrangements normally require national legislation.

42. Thirty malaria-endemic countries in Africa have yet to provide a clear indication that they have eliminated or reduced taxes and tariffs on mosquito nets and insecticide, and this impedes the wide scale utilization of this very effective malaria-prevention tool by the most vulnerable population groups in these countries. The elimination of taxes and tariffs is one very tangible and relatively easy to achieve indication of political commitment to malaria control.

VII. Progress towards Abuja Goals

43. The 2000 Abuja Summit on Roll Back Malaria, held in Abuja, endorsed a shortlist of relatively inexpensive malaria-control interventions already available and known to be effective.

44. Insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) are a low-cost and highly effective way of reducing the incidence of malaria in people who sleep under them, and they have been conclusively shown in a series of trials to substantially reduce child mortality in malaria-endemic areas of Africa. By preventing malaria, ITNs reduce the need for treatment and the pressure on health services, which is particularly important in view of the increase in drug-resistant falciparum malaria parasites. In nine countries surveyed between 1997 and 2001, a median 13 per cent of households possess one or more nets. A median 1.3 per cent of households surveyed in three countries own at least one ITN. The proportion of under-5 children sleeping under nets is also low — about 15 per cent across 28 countries surveyed. Even fewer older children (less than 2 per cent) sleep under ITNs. Only two countries, the Gambia and Sao Tome and Principe, reported ITN use rates of more than 10 per cent. While current rates of coverage are generally low, the availability and use of nets have increased appreciably over the past 10 years, particularly in countries where nets were not normally used. In the United Republic of Tanzania, for example, nets were rare in the 1980s, especially in rural areas, but ownership has increased to 63 per cent in towns and to 29 per cent in rural areas. In Zambia, the trend may be more pronounced, as preliminary survey data from 2002 show a dramatic increase in net ownership in households since 1999. Such trends are encouraging and highlight the progress that is being made.

45. The price of nets has fallen substantially as a result of greater demand, increased competition between producers, and reductions in taxes and tariffs and other obstacles to trade. In many countries, both nets and the insecticide to treat them can now be purchased in small shops and markets and even on street corners. At least five large factories in Africa are now producing nets. Almost all malaria-endemic African countries now have active programmes under way to encourage

ITN use, and most of these support a variety of different mechanisms to increase net coverage. Nevertheless, the commercial price of nets and insecticide — though falling — still puts this life-saving technology beyond the reach of the poorest groups of the population. Major efforts are now being made in at least five African countries to provide subsidized ITNs to the most vulnerable groups — young children and pregnant women.

46. Treated nets and other means of reducing mosquito bites will not totally prevent malaria. People who become ill with the disease need prompt and effective treatment to prevent the development of severe manifestations and death. Since the 1980s, parasite resistance to chloroquine, the most commonly available antimalarial drug, has emerged as a major challenge. In most countries in eastern, central, and southern Africa, chloroquine has lost its clinical effectiveness as a malaria treatment. A similar evolution is taking place, though some years later, in western Africa, and there is indirect, but compelling, evidence that this is giving rise to increasing mortality. Unfortunately, resistance to the most common replacement drug, sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine, has also emerged, especially in eastern and southern Africa.

47. Over the past few years, 13 countries in Africa have changed their national policies to require the use of more effective antimalarial treatments. Where current monotherapies are failing, WHO recommends artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT), which is highly efficacious and promises to delay the emergence of resistance. So far, however, its use is constrained by high costs and limited operational experience in Africa. To date, four African countries have adopted ACTs as first-line treatment.

48. Recent survey data have shown that an average of 42 per cent of children under 5 years with fever were treated with an antimalarial. However, more than 80 per cent of these reported treatments were with chloroquine, so the coverage with effective treatment is likely to have been much lower. In addition, many treatments may not have been within 24 hours of onset of symptoms, and dosages may have been inadequate. These coverage estimates therefore represent an upper limit of the coverage with prompt, effective treatment, and the true value is probably much lower.

49. In nine countries where a number of national surveys have been conducted over the past 15 years, there has been an increasing trend towards use of antimalarials for treatment of febrile under-5s. These national surveys provide further proof that the use of antimalarials is widespread and common. The apparent increasing responsiveness of caretakers of young children towards accessing antimalarial treatment highlights the opportunity for achieving further improvements in access to more effective antimalarials and caretaker compliance with treatment regimens.

50. In many malaria-endemic countries the first treatment for malaria is often purchased from a shop and taken at home. Recent studies indicate that home treatment, supported by public information and pre-packaging (as an aid, to ensure that patients take the full treatment course at the right time), can help to reduce malaria mortality in children. Many countries now concentrate on making effective malaria treatment available close to the home, through support to community initiatives and engagement of drug sellers and the pharmaceutical industry. Realizing the full potential of effective treatment as a tool for reducing mortality

will require a systems approach, ensuring that effective drugs are affordable (which will often require subsidization) and that they are supported by appropriate education of formal and informal providers, as well as mothers, and by quality assurance and regulation.

51. The impact of malaria on pregnant women and their newborns can be substantially reduced by the recently recommended use of intermittent preventive treatment (IPT). This strategy provides at least two treatment doses of an effective antimalarial at routine antenatal clinics to all pregnant women living in areas at risk of endemic falciparum malaria in Africa (irrespective of whether they are actually infected with malaria or not). About two-thirds of pregnant women in Africa south of the Sahara attend clinics for antenatal care, and incorporating IPT for malaria into their routine care should be straightforward. Now an integral part of the Making Pregnancy Safer strategy, IPT has been adopted as policy by six countries to replace chemoprophylaxis; most other countries in the region are reviewing their policies in the light of the new recommendation. The beneficial effects of IPT will probably be additive to the proven benefits of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) use by pregnant women. A comprehensive approach to the prevention and management of malaria during pregnancy therefore calls for a combination of IPT, support for ITN use, and prompt access to effective treatment. Five countries in eastern and southern Africa have recently formed a coalition to reduce the impact of malaria during pregnancy through this combined approach.

52. Areas on the northern and southern fringes of the malaria-endemic belt of Africa, as well as highland areas in many countries, are at risk of epidemic malaria. Unlike the endemic disease, epidemic malaria typically affects people of all ages and can have high case-fatality. Roll Back Malaria has been supporting efforts to improve the early recognition of, and effective and timely response to, malaria epidemics. Indoor residual spraying can play an important role in malaria vector control, especially in the control of epidemics. Malaria early-warning systems have been established in southern Africa and studies have started in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Sudan. These efforts will improve outbreak detection and response. Further, 15 epidemic-prone countries have developed a preparedness plan of action for malaria epidemics.

VIII. Transfer of technology for production of treated nets and efforts to increase access to antimalarial medicines

53. **Long-lasting insecticidal nets**. In response to low re-treatment rates of conventional insecticide-treated nets, especially in Africa, WHO prompted industry to develop long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) — ready-to-use, factory-pre-treated nets that require no further treatment during their expected lifespan of 4-5 years. This technology obviates the need for re-treatment (unlike conventional ITNs, LLINs resist washing) and reduces both human exposure (at any given time, most of the insecticide is hidden and not bioavailable) and the risk of environmental contamination.

54. Using the most recent fibre technologies, LLINs are regarded as a major breakthrough in malaria prevention. One type of LLIN is already commercially available and is recommended by WHO. A second type of LLIN, based on a different technology, has been submitted to WHO for testing and the results of these

tests are expected later in 2003. At a current price of around US$ 5 per net, LLINs are already more cost-effective than conventionally treated nets.

55. Current global production capacity of WHO-recommended LLINs is insufficient to meet expected demand. WHO, UNICEF and other RBM partners have successfully worked with a multinational company based in Japan and with a manufacturer of nets, based in Tanzania, to transfer the new technology for the production of LLINs to Tanzania. It is anticipated that the first LLINs manufactured in Africa will be available in September 2003.

56. In order to meet anticipated need for LLINs in Africa, an additional 5 to 10 factories, with a similar capacity to the factory in Tanzania, will be required at strategic locations throughout Africa within the next few years. It is likely that the lower costs of transport and labour will result in LLINs being produced in Africa at a lower cost than elsewhere in the world, thus giving an additional boost to African efforts to tackle malaria. The World Health Organization and UNICEF, together with other organizations and foundations, have commissioned the development of a business plan for the scaling-up of production of LLINs in Africa. It is anticipated that this business plan will be finalized and available in October 2003. It is proposed that a high-level conference take place at this time to bring together representatives of the African business community, representatives of African Governments, investors and companies with the necessary technology in order to start implementing the plan.

57. LLINs are produced from polymers derived from petroleum. Petroleum extraction in Africa and off Africa's shores is increasing. WHO and other RBM partners have been actively engaging petroleum extraction companies with interests in Africa to contribute to efforts to make LLINs available at the lowest possible cost, perhaps through the provision of free or low-cost polymer for their manufacture. One petroleum company has responded positively to this initiative and other petroleum companies are encouraged to consider participating.

58. **Access to effective antimalarial drugs**: Several newly developed drugs could replace malaria treatments that are no longer effective. In particular, artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs) have enormous potential in malaria therapy. The combination of multiple drugs enhances clinical efficacy and may delay the development of resistance of parasites. However, these drugs are not yet widely available or affordable.

59. The achievement of the Abuja target of 60 per cent coverage with prompt and effective antimalarial treatment will require more effective methods to improve delivery and compliance with recommended regimens. Measures will include full integration of malaria treatment into national health systems, improving access to effective drugs for treatment as close to the home as possible, and engaging the private sector.

60. However, currently allocated financial resources for health care in most of the low-income malaria-endemic countries will not be sufficient to respond to malaria treatment needs. Although financial support for antimalarial treatment is increasing, this has not kept pace with the costs of replacing with newer drugs (including ACTs) those that are no longer effective because of parasite resistance. African Governments and the global community are asked to address urgently the need to

allocate substantial resources for the delivery of more effective treatment regimens to those most at risk of malaria.

61. Additional strategies, such as cost containment by pooled procurement, negotiation of more favourable prices, removal of charges, tariffs and taxes, and the introduction of subsidies, are key to improving the affordability of newer and more expensive treatment regimens and to the widespread availability of these treatments to at-risk populations in Africa.

62. The World Health Organization has reached an agreement with one pharmaceutical company through which an effective artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) treatment can be made available for public sector use in malaria-endemic countries at cost price. This agreement has already resulted in several African countries accessing ACT treatments. Further agreements and arrangements of this type are being sought. There is currently a severe but hopefully temporary shortage of high quality drugs for other types of ACT treatments. Further efforts need to be made to engage pharmaceutical manufacturers, donor Governments and Governments of malaria-endemic countries to identify ways to increase the availability and lower the cost of such treatments.

IX. Reducing risk of malaria transmission in development planning

63. The incorporation of disease control safeguards in the development of water resources and land use is essential for the sustainable development of malaria-endemic countries. WHO has therefore enhanced its technical support to countries for effective disease management in resource development planning.

64. **Promotion of environmental management for malaria control in development**. The first volume of the World Water Development Report was published by the World Water Assessment Programme and UNESCO on behalf of 23 United Nations agencies. The report was launched at the Third World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan in March 2003. WHO inputs into the report focused on the broad water-and-health issues and extensively covered the control of malaria transmission in water resources development and management.

65. The WHO session at the World Water Forum was programmed around health economics of water interventions for health and the effectiveness of water interventions for the control of malaria. Other major conferences where the environmental management options for malaria control were highlighted included the Congress of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage in Montreal Canada, in July 2002, and the Meeting of the Multilateral Initiative on Malaria in Arusha, Tanzania in November 2002.

66. **Research on environmental management for malaria control in development**. WHO has supported the establishment of the System-wide Initiative on Malaria and Agriculture (SIMA), which is a cross-cutting research programme of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). SIMA is hosted by the International Water Management Institute. As a member of the SIMA steering committee WHO will influence the scope and priorities in multidisciplinary research in this area. The research results will provide an important basis for policy adjustment and programme development in the agriculture sector, which take into

account the need for environmental management in order to reduce malaria transmission risk in agro-ecosystems. A research programme set up in 1994 between the World Health Organization/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/United Nations Environment Programme Panel of Experts on Environmental Management for Vector Control (PEEM) and the West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA, Bouaké), belonging to the CGIAR, is now yielding its key results, which will lead to improved disease control.

67. **Capacity-building for malaria control in development**: Health impact assessment (HIA) is a critical tool in ensuring that source reduction and environmental management measures are included in development planning and activities, especially in the case of water resources development. To assist Member States in developing HIA capacity, the WHO Water, Sanitation and Health Programme has developed and published a training manual that addresses the need for skills development for intersectoral decision-making at the national level. A training course is scheduled to be held in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in October 2003, in the context of the proposed Nam Theun 2 dam and plans have been made to support similar training in other countries.

68. **Development and implementation of affordable interventions for malaria control**: WHO has enhanced its support to countries in the implementation of integrated vector management (IVM), which aims at maximizing the combined use of different interventions that are locally effective and affordable, in order to compound the overall impact on the control of vector-borne diseases. Hence, the use of environmental management intervention for mosquito source reduction is an integral part of IVM.

69. WHO is collaborating with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, to support the strengthening of national vector control programmes and infrastructure. Sixteen countries in Africa have been supported in the development and implementation of national action plans on integrated vector management (IVM), while eight others have initiated work on developing national action plans. The majority of the malaria-endemic countries have also benefited from human resource development efforts.

70. Guidelines for vector control needs assessment are being completed in their final draft form and will be field tested in five selected countries in the fourth quarter of 2003.

71. An IVM Partnership, involving malaria-endemic countries and regional and international organizations/institutions, was established under the auspices of WHO in January 2003. The Partnership has agreed on a framework to coordinate action on IVM, identified priority actions at national and international levels, and explored opportunities for mobilizing resources for the priority actions.

72. **Technical cooperation on disease control in development**: The impending conflict between the agriculture sector and the environment sector over trends in water-use patterns has important health dimensions. In recognition of the need to address this potential conflict through dialogue, at a time when both technical solutions and dependence on market forces have lost their impact, a 10 agency programme entitled Dialogue on Water, Food and Environment was established in 2002. WHO participation in this time-limited effort aims at introducing health as a

cross-cutting issue in this dialogue, and malaria is one of the key diseases that needs coverage.

X. Plans for 2005 evaluation of progress in achieving Abuja Summit objectives

73. Monitoring and evaluation of Roll Back Malaria (RBM) progress was intensified during 2002 and resulted in the Africa Malaria Report — 2003. The Report described the malaria burden and trends, policies and implementation of key interventions, constraints and obstacles to implementation and financing in Africa south of the Sahara. Data were mainly from the period 1998 to 2002 and, as such, provide a baseline against which to evaluate progress by 2005.

74. In May 2003, a Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group (MERG) was established as an advisory body of RBM partners to work to establish robust systems to reliably monitor the malaria situation and evaluate the effectiveness of RBM interventions. WHO has been named as Chair of the Reference Group, and UNICEF is co-chair. The Reference Group established task forces on five priority issues:

(a) Malaria Mortality Trends: to address the monitoring and estimation of malaria-attributed and malaria-related mortality, for country-level impact monitoring as well as global burden estimations.

(b) Malaria Prevalence Indicator: to develop consensus on estimation of the morbidity burden of malaria and the malaria prevalence indicator of the Millennium Development Goals.

(c) Malaria-related anaemia: to address the possible use of anaemia in young children and/or pregnant women as an additional indicator of malaria burden and control impact, depending on data collection costs, and with representation from the nutritional programmatic field.

(d) Strengthening of national monitoring and evaluation capacity for RBM activities: to develop a framework for providing support at the country and subregional levels for improved monitoring and evaluation systems.

(e) Population-based surveys: to develop appropriate tools and guidelines for collection of high-quality data on core RBM indicators for use by national programmes; to explore options for additional, more regular surveys of intervention coverage in RBM priority countries, including collaboration with other planned surveys (e.g. Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) cluster survey); to produce and promote the universal use of a high-quality standardized focussed malaria survey module.

75. Building upon the Africa Malaria 2003 Report, a Global Malaria Report will be prepared by the summer of 2004. This next report will outline the epidemiological situation of malaria in malaria-endemic countries throughout the world, and it will report on the status of malaria interventions and policies. The progress of implementation in individual country programmes, and the support provided by the international community will also be reviewed for a group of priority countries.

76. This first Global Malaria Report will be updated on a yearly basis thereafter. Annual reports will serve as overviews on the measures taken and progress made towards the achievement of the mid-term target. Key sources on coverage with insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) and antimalarial treatment will include the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) conducted by Macro International with core support from USAID, and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) conducted by UNICEF. The report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session will include the most recent information on the global malaria situation, including an update on activities related to evaluation of progress towards the mid-term targets. For evaluation of the 2005 achievements against the Abuja coverage targets, much data on these indicators will derive from the next round of MICS surveys that will take place in 2005 and for which data will be forthcoming in 2006.

77. Complementing ongoing regional efforts, a standardized mechanism for regular reporting from countries will be established to bring into closer alignment with current efforts of other major programmes (e.g. tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, EPI).

78. As first preparatory step, the evaluation of the mid-term target will be an agenda item of the next Reference Group meeting, to be held in November 2003 in Nairobi. Representation of the African Union is being sought.

XI. Conclusions and recommendations

79. Malaria is preventable, treatable and curable. Despite the great complexity of this disease, major advances in control can be achieved immediately in many countries using existing tools. The development of new tools, such as a vaccine against malaria, deserve continuing support, but even with substantial investment and very good fortune, an effective malaria vaccine is still a number of years away. In the meantime, malaria-endemic countries require substantial support to expand the coverage of existing control tools, especially the ones with proven impact in Africa: insecticide-treated nets, prompt and effective treatment, and intermittent preventive treatment in pregnancy.

80. Progress in malaria control is being made, but it is still too slow. The establishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is a ground-breaking development as it is making it possible for African countries, for the first time ever, to access funds for malaria control, which are commensurate with the needs. As the Global Fund review and administrative processes become established, funds are now starting to flow to countries enabling them to accelerate implementation of malaria-control activities.

81. It is estimated that approximately 1 billion US dollars per year are needed to effectively combat malaria in Africa alone. Currently only about one quarter of these resources are actually available. Recent macroeconomic analyses indicate that the net return on investment in malaria control is substantial, far exceeding the initial investment, in terms of improved economic performance and reduced poverty.

It is therefore recommended that the General Assembly:

(a) **Call upon the international community to ensure that the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria receives increased funding to**

enable sound plans to control malaria in endemic countries to be implemented and sustained in a way that contributes to health system development.

(b) **Call upon the international community to continue to support RBM partner organizations, including the World Health Organization and UNICEF, as vital complementary sources of support to malaria-endemic countries to ensure that additional financial resources are effectively utilized and that progress in malaria control is well monitored and reported.**

(c) **Call upon malaria-endemic countries to increase domestic resource allocation to malaria control.**

(d) **Urges all Member States in Africa that have not yet done so to implement the recommendation of the Abuja Summit to reduce or waive taxes and tariffs for nets and other commodities needed for malaria control, both to reduce the price of nets to consumers and to stimulate free trade in insecticide-treated nets.**

(e) **Call upon the international community and particularly the international business and financial community to support ways of stimulating the development of viable factories in Africa to manufacture most of the insecticide-treated nets needed by the population of the continent each year in the near future.**

(f) **Call upon companies extracting petroleum products from Africa to consider providing polymer for the manufacture of mosquito nets at a greatly reduced price as a contribution to rolling back malaria in Africa.**

(g) **Urges the pharmaceutical industry to take note of the increasing demand for high-quality, low-cost combination treatment for malaria, particularly in Africa, and to form alliances and partnerships to help ensure that no one dies from malaria because the treatment is too expensive.**